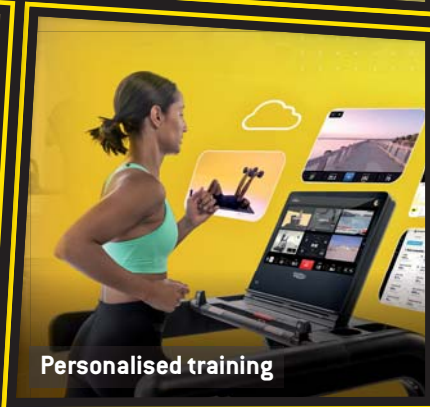
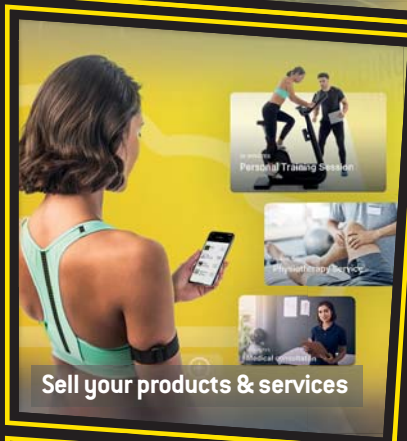
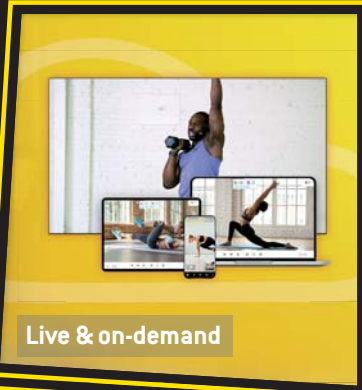


300th ISSUE





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Marking a milestone

As *HCM* celebrates its 300th issue, it's time to look back and celebrate the entrepreneurs and companies that have got us where we are today, with their energy and determination

How the years fly by when you're having fun! It was quite a double-take for the *HCM* team when we realised we were approaching 300 editions of the magazine and I hope you enjoy our special feature on page 62, celebrating this milestone.

When we set off on this journey, the fitness industry as we know it today was still in its infancy, with just a handful of trailblazing independent clubs such as Holmes Place (1980) the Hogarth Club (1981) and David Lloyd (1982) in existence.

Over the years, we've been privileged to write about the launch of the major industry players that followed, including such legends as The Barbican Health and Fitness Centre in 1988 (now owned by Nuffield), Dragons (1991), Fitness First (1993), Bannatyne (1997), Vardon/Cannons (1998) Virgin Active (1999) and so the list goes on.

It's almost impossible now to imagine a time when there were no health clubs, gyms and studios and the only way to exercise was to play sport or go for a run in your fairly terrible training shoes (Nike UK, 1982) or do some press-ups (Technogym, 1983). Perhaps one of your best options was to do a Jane Fonda workout (1982).

Writing in this issue on page 71, Dave Stalker celebrates this era and the characters who shaped the emerging sector, saying "Our industry was blessed to have a generation of entrepreneurs ... and a great market has been built on their shoulders..."

This is an important thing to celebrate, as the industry was forged by individuals of huge energy and passion, such as John Treharne, Harm Tegelaars, Fred Turok, Mark Mastrov and David Giampaolo.

The sector that's emerged is now one of the most visible parts of the global economy, intertwined with the lives of millions of people, with millions of employees and an army of suppliers driving innovation at a breathtaking speed.

From our small start, *HCM* has grown to be read by people in 14,000 cities around the world, something I would not have believed possible at the outset.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK / KANYPKEL



It's an industry which saves lives and changes lives

“Our industry was blessed to have a generation of energetic entrepreneurs and a great market has been built on their shoulders”

We embraced the internet very early on and now publish in seven formats, including a raft of digital, online, social, ezine and – still – print, for those who prefer it.

This is more than a job for most in the industry – me included. It's an industry that changes lives, that saves lives and that creates quality of life, which makes our work rewarding and meaningful.

Thank you to everyone who makes what we do possible – especially our clients, authors and the *HCM* teams, past and present – with a special shout out to publisher, Jan Williams, who is the beating heart of *HCM*.

Liz Terry, editor
lizterry@leisuremedia.com

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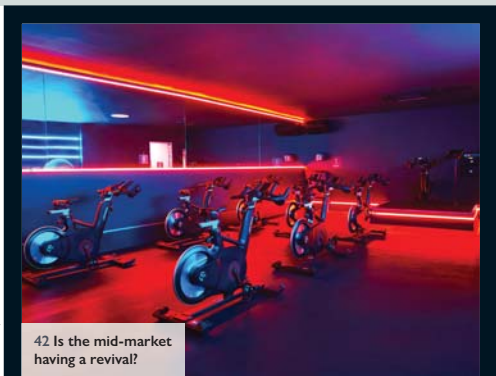
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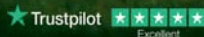
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2022, YOUR YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION

Double down on digital to drive live fitness with Les Mills.

Majority of members prefer a 60:40 split between the gym and home workouts, with gym members being twice as likely to use digital fitness options compared to non-members (36% vs.18%). Omnichannel fitness is the way to win in 2022, how does your membership offer cater for them working out with you, wherever they are?

*Source: 2021 Global Fitness Report, Les Mills

Live. Virtual. At Home



Write to reply

Fuel the debate about issues and opportunities across the industry. We'd love to hear from you – letters@leisuremedia.com

“

When the time comes to chart the history of our great sector, HCM will be there as having been responsible for creating the richest primary source material

Celebrating 300 editions of HCM

Steven Ward, Chief transformation officer, GO fit, ukactive 2006-2019



Steven Ward

PHOTO: STEVEN WARD / GO FIT GROUP

This edition marks the 300th publication of what was *Health Club Management* magazine – now known by its ubiquitous abbreviation of *HCM* – and universally recognised for its unfaltering devotion to its mission of uniting the world of fitness.


When the time comes to chart the history of the evolution of our great sector, *HCM* will be there as having been responsible for creating the richest primary source material. Through the emergence, growth, professionalisation and ongoing evolution of an industry, *HCM* has been there to tell the stories and inspire us all. The new formats. The entrepreneurs. The latest innovations in products. The magazine, along with its website, ezine, social feeds and *HCM Handbook*, has helped us to follow the development of careers, detect the new trends

and share what matters to us all with our global industry peers.

Through the course of 300 editions, we've seen the rise and fall and rise again of great industry brands. We've seen the impacts on the industry of dramatic events, economic crashes, pandemics and conflict and also huge phases of growth. We've debated the topics on the mind of industry leaders, sought to be reflective on our place in the world, and considered what we might have to do to continue to elevate the value and importance of physical activity to society.

We've seen our great industry thrive and push through challenges, in a constant state of evolution, with each new generation of industry-leading companies bringing new energy, impetus and drive to the sector.





Our industry is full of people committed to making a positive impact

At this moment of reflection on 300 editions, can we cast our mind forwards to what will fill the pages of this publication in 300 editions' time? What world will we be in? What industry will we have created? What impact will we have made on the lives of communities? What status do we wish to have in the societies in which we operate? So many open questions, for ourselves, our companies, our stakeholders and our industry.

The only thing of which we can be certain is that the pages of this publication will continue to be filled

by people full of commitment to making a positive mark on the world, improving health and wellbeing across the globe and striving relentlessly to push our great industry forward.

It's the people that make this industry what it is, and it's the people who will create its future.

In times of great challenge, of such complex uncertainty, we should be grateful for the routines and rhythms that help us feel grounded. HCM landing on our desk every month, along with HCM's daily news feed and twice weekly ezines provides us

with infrastructure around which our fantastic industry can coalesce, share its successes, debate its failures and prepare its next evolution. Sincere congratulations to Liz Terry and Jan Williams and the entire HCM team past and present that have got us to this point. Let's all commit to filling these pages for another 300 editions with the stories we are yet to write, and the impact we are yet to make.

Enjoy the HCM archive online, on Digital Turning Pages and on PDF at www.HCMmag.com/archive



I'd love Myzone to be the go-to data collector of physical activity evidence for the world

Dave Wright

Founder and CEO Myzone



How did it all start?

My membership marketing company, CFM, had been attracting millions of new members for health club operators, but half of these were leaving every year and I wanted to find a way of supporting our clients to keep members in their clubs for longer.

There were loads of issues to tackle. The industry was rewarding fitness instead of effort, there was a lack of accountability among members, competition from external consumer fitness products and operators had challenges sustaining motivation among members.

There was also no club gamification, a lack of trainer connection with members and ultimately, no sense of tribe.

What solution did you see?

As a gym operator myself (Wright had 11 clubs on two continents operating under the Feelgood Fitness and Voyage Fitness brands and served over 20,000 members), I'd always used heart rate monitors, but

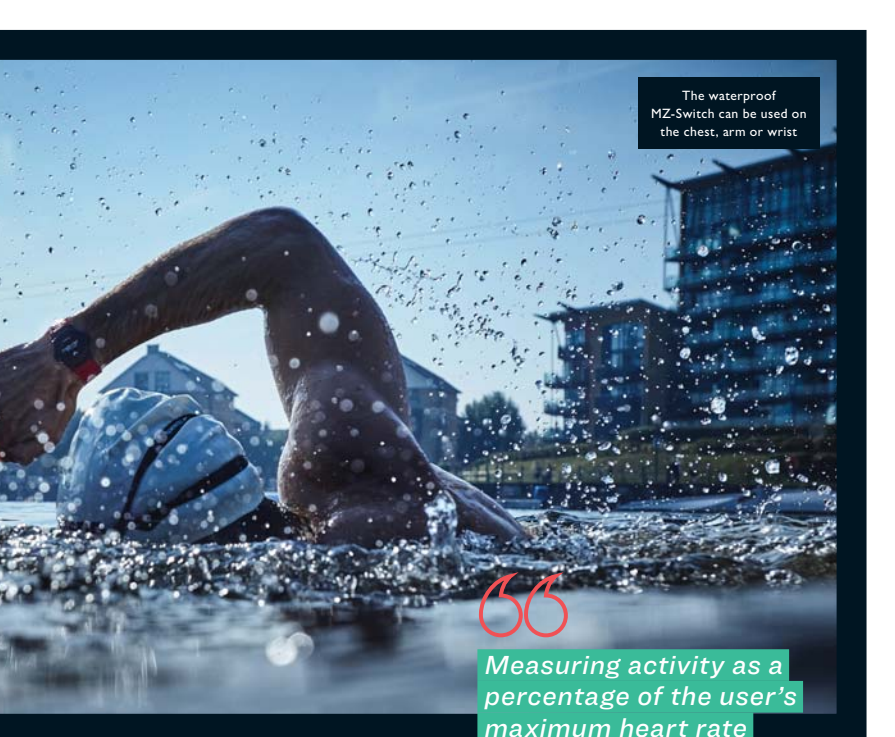
in 2009 I started thinking about how tech could be advanced to solve the retention issues we'd identified.

I believed a system that allowed the wireless transfer of data stored on a heart rate monitor could revolutionise the gym experience, enabling members to use the monitors both in and outside of a club, with the data being automatically uploaded when they returned to the gym.

We set about creating the product – we called it Myzone and outsourced the development to a manufacturing company while starting to create a buzz about it in the fitness industry.

We were so excited about the potential of Myzone that we invested too early in advertising and marketing and pre-sold the system to a number of large operators.

Unfortunately, the manufacturing company we were working with believed we were trying to achieve the impossible, and the product they made didn't live up to the hype we'd created. We had to keep recalling the products and eventually, it



The waterproof
MZ-Switch can be used on
the chest, arm or wrist

“

Measuring activity as a percentage of the user's maximum heart rate creates a level playing field, allowing members to compete, regardless of their fitness level

got so bad we moved to deal with the factories directly and made the product ourselves.

Luckily, our operator clients knew us, had faith in us and gave Myzone another try which was successful, but we did lose a significant amount of time and money.

When did it launch in its full glory?

Myzone finally launched properly in March 2012 with a patent on the 'wireless transfer of data from a stored belt' in North America and patent-pending in the rest of the world.

The technology provides users with instant feedback on their exercise intensity, as well as feedback over time, allowing members to track their progress whether they're working out in a club, at home or in their local park. When members strap on the Myzone belt or MZ-Switch, screens around the club provide a real-time display of their training intensity, which acts as a powerful motivator.

The technology rewards the effort members put into their workouts, rather than their fitness levels, giving them Myzone Effort Points (MEPs) for every minute they spend exercising in their personal intensity zones.

The system encourages members to work hard. The more effort they put in, the more MEPS they accumulate and the closer they get to achieving the results they want. Measuring activity as a percentage of the user's maximum heart rate creates a level playing field, allowing members to compete against each other regardless of their level of fitness. It means operators can run challenges in their club, with other clubs, nationally and internationally, creating a fun and sociable gym experience.

It gives operators a unique insight into the key metrics and behaviours of their members and for the first time, club managers can stay connected with members whether they use the club every day, once a month or not at all.

What other benefits does it bring?

The technology is suitable for all fitness levels, and as such is utilised by elite athletes as well as those new to exercise or people suffering medical conditions. It puts trainers into the role of coach. They know exactly how hard their clients are working and can encourage and give feedback on their activity between scheduled sessions.

The technology also gives members accountability when they're away from the gym. Between visits, they can view their live effort stream through the free Myzone app and can view their daily, weekly, or even yearly effort levels to see how they've progressed.

Myzone creates a sense of tribe among members who can take part in friendly competition in the club and share their workouts on social media.

How much market penetration have you achieved?

To date, Myzone has been adopted by over 9,000 clubs in 84 countries, translated into 19 different languages and we've shipped over two million devices around the world.

Have you carried on innovating?

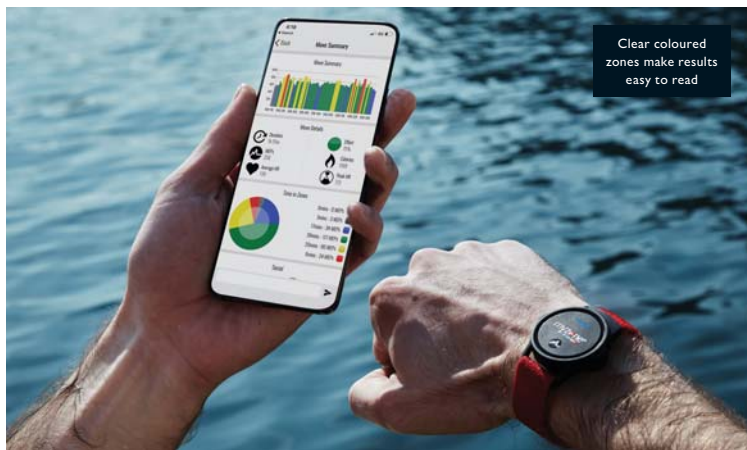
MZ-Switch was launched in 2021. The world's first interchangeable heart rate monitor, it can be used on the chest, arm or wrist and is also 100 per cent waterproof.

MZ-Switch combines Myzone's ethos of rewarding effort with long battery life, accuracy and real-time feedback. It's the only fitness tracker that supports people, however they choose to move.

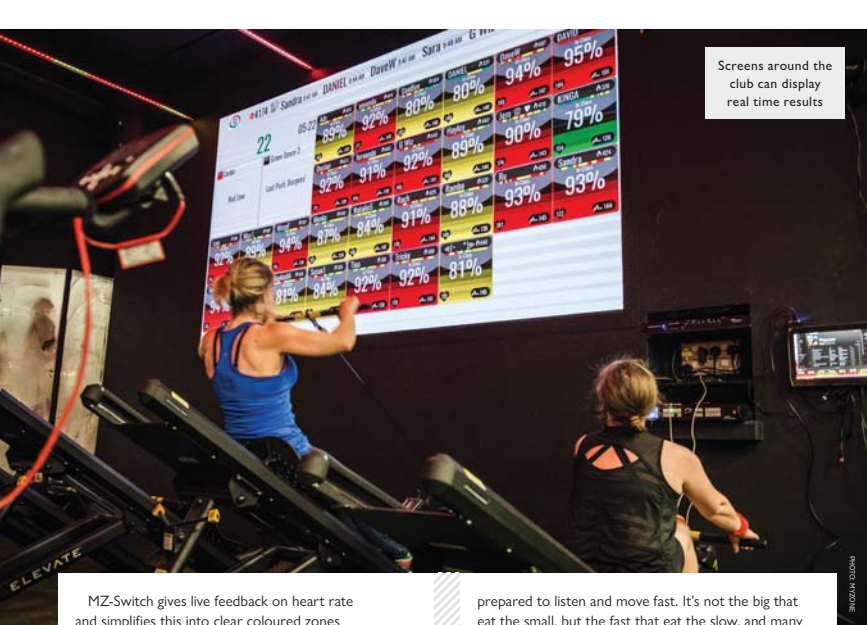
The new tracker enables users to monitor and get MEPs for every single type of physical activity as it is wearable in three different ways, this means reaching the World Health Organization's *Guidelines for Physical Activity* (which equates to 1,300 MEPs per month), is more attainable than ever.



Myzone creates a sense of tribe among members who can take part in friendly competition in the club and share their workouts on social media



Clear coloured zones make results easy to read



Screens around the club can display real time results

PHOTO: MYZONE

MZ-Switch gives live feedback on heart rate and simplifies this into clear coloured zones which reflect the level of effort being put into the activity. It automatically calibrates to resting and peak heart rate and takes into account age to personalise each effort zone to the user.

The more effort, the more MEPs users earn, regardless of athletic ability or physical activity. This simple system ensures users receive data on metrics such as average intensity, heart rate and calories burned, which provides insight into the information that truly matters in their workout – personal effort.

MZ-Switch is also the first device in the world that has both PPG (photoplethysmography) and ECG (electrocardiography) readings, providing a complete pathway for accurate monitoring and ensuring there are no blind spots in a user's physical activity measurement.

What has been key to Myzone's success?

Fundamentally it's because of our people. The pedigree of our senior leadership team comprises over 100 years at executive level in the fitness industry.

Many tech companies try and parachute into the health and fitness industry with their tech solution, but we all started from within the industry to try and solve the issue of exercise adherence and retention.

That trust, respect and leadership position has enabled us to sit at the table of the top global operators and independent sites to learn and get honest feedback. The other key is that we are always

prepared to listen and move fast. It's not the big that eat the small, but the fast that eat the slow, and many operators appreciate that fast-paced development.

BGF recently invested \$17.2m in Myzone. Tell us about the deal

Since 2016, when we began to get global traction, we got an enormous amount of attention from private equity companies.

We've been in a very fortunate position in that we required no external finance, because we bootstrapped the growth of Myzone from our other business – CFM – and were able to maintain a positive cashflow almost from day one.

Over lockdown we were approached by 21 different private equity companies or advisors. There was a lot of capital in the market that had to be deployed and after a lot of research we ended up going with BGF.

How will you use the money?

We have big plans to help more people be more active more often. This involves enabling corporate organisations, schools and continued development in new territories such as Central and South America and expansion into the rest of Asia. Having a 'war-chest' of money enables us to think big without financial limitations.

It will also enable us to grow our team and offices, along with supporting OCR organisations such as Spartan, Tough Mudder, Hyrox, Turf Games and more.



We're planning to offer a customisable timetable for operators with access to the 700+ videos we have in our library. This will take Myzone to a whole new level



PHOTO: MYZONE

Investor Vin Murria has pledged US\$2.5m

Why did you choose BGF?

As this was our first step into the realm of Private Equity, we wanted to choose a partner that was minority and equity only and was light-touch in its non-controlling stake.

Our leadership team is so strong and we're a relatively mature business, so we didn't need someone telling us what to do, but instead supporting us in realising the opportunities.

BGF is the most active capital growth investor in the UK and was originally set up by the UK's banks to support UK Businesses, so has an impeccable reputation of following through with what they say they're going to do.

How did Vin Murria get involved?

In the process of taking on an investor, you typically agree on a new non-executive chair for the company. There were a whole host of options, but I happened to attend an event in London where Vin was a speaker and decided to reach out to her directly.

She's built multiple billion-dollar tech businesses, has an abundance of business knowledge, earning her an OBE in the tech world and has fantastic energy.

She loved what Myzone stood for and its purpose of helping more people to be physically active and decided she'd love to be involved – something she wouldn't normally do unless she owned the whole business.

What has she invested? And why's she a fit?

Most non-executive chairs invest a nominal £100k sum to show a level of commitment. Vin put in US\$2.5 million dollars, which blew the minds of the BGF investment team. It meant I had two experienced institutional investors committed to supporting Myzone's growth.

Vin provides a level of tech experience the fitness industry has never seen in an executive position and will help us all lift our game. As a female, Indian entrepreneur she often gets called into meetings and dinners with the UK government to get her take on the industry. She has a contact book that would be the envy of any entrepreneur.

She's also been a member of a David Lloyd club for 15 years, so loves to exercise, but has never entered the business side of the industry. We're privileged Myzone is her first investment.

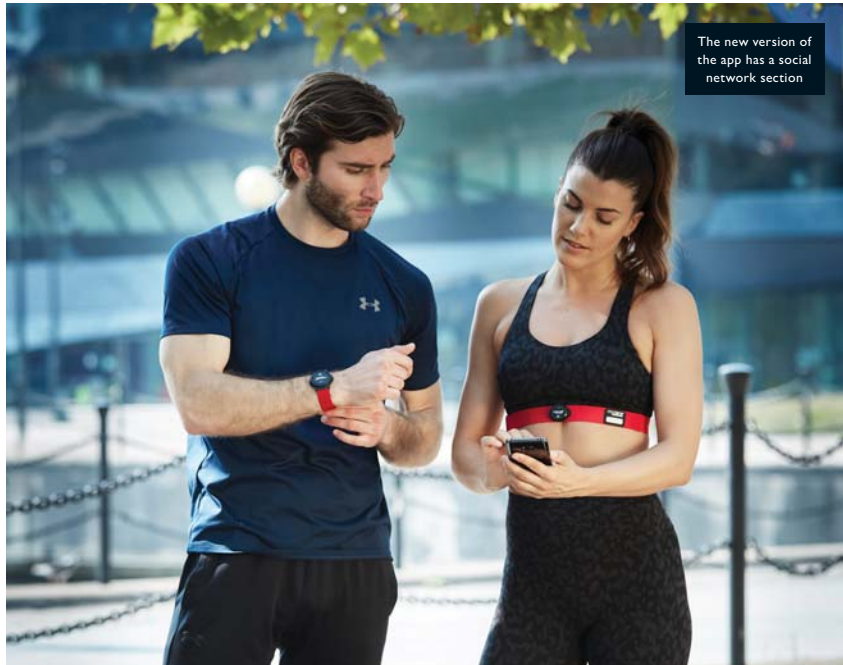
What will her role be?

She'll begin as non-exec chair. She has a business partner – Paul Gibson – who will also support us with operational expertise, so we can build from a US\$100m business to US\$500m in 3-4 years.

Every type of activity can be monitored



PHOTO: MYZONE



How do clubs benefit from Myzone?

There are only four ways a club can make more money: 1. Increase the number of members. 2. Increase the price of membership. 3. Increase the yield per member. Or 4. Cut costs.

Myzone assists in all four areas by providing a tech solution that engages members with their facility. This helps clubs provide substance to their increased membership price and the longer someone stays at the club, the more the member yields. Costs can also be reduced with Myzone due to the inclusive virtual class offering, free member app, group training prescription and the ability to remote-coach clients at scale.

Tell us about the evolution of the app

The new app (released 24th January 2022) has improved UI and UX functionality. It has a social network section enabling members, coaches and clubs to connect and motivate each other based on effort rather than fitness while also enabling users to upload images of their workouts to encourage conversation.

We've built-in a booking diary, challenges for clubs, individuals, teams and groups, a place to upload and store body metrics and a membership

card option. These are all free within the app. It also has the ability to show the club's logo.

There's also a step counter called MZ-Motion built in that converts steps into minutes of activity. This is a great way to collect and report on incidental movement.

What else are you planning to add?

In 2020 we introduced the ability for operators to be their own 'Peleton' throughout the pandemic lockdowns. We're now planning on offering a complete customisable timetable for operators around the globe with access to the 700+ videos we have in our library. This will take Myzone to a whole new level.

What's the focus, and future, for Myzone?

We've had 10 frantic years and now we plan to formalise our approach, while staying as agile as possible with the ever-growing team.

Our vision is to be the go-to data collector of physical activity evidence for the world, to help shape government policy around the benefits of exercise and to motivate the world to be more physically active. ●

More: www.myzone.org



MindLabs makes looking after mental health as normal as going to the gym

Adnan Ebrahim

Co-founder and CEO, MindLabs



Tell us about MindLabs

It's a new mental health platform that hopes to make looking after mental health as normal as going to the gym.

We believe it's the first platform in the mental wellness industry to prioritise live and on-demand video-led content over other forms of media, giving users access to hundreds of engaging classes on their mobile phones.

It's based on neuroscience, utilising knowledge from mindfulness practitioners, ranging from breathwork expert Richie Bostock to clinical psychologist Dr Erica McInnis and neuroscientist Anne-Sophie Fluri.

Classes are designed to help users rewire their brains to sleep better, stress less, be more energised and feel happier.

How does it work?

It uses live and on-demand content to help people overcome stress, anxiety and low mood and improve their sleep patterns.

What inspired you to create MindLabs?

For far too long, we've neglected taking care of our minds in the same way we take care of our physical selves.

We've been ashamed to speak openly about this mislabelling mental vulnerability as weakness and approaching practices such as mindfulness with caution, worried about its scientific vigour.

How much does it cost to use?

The MindLabs app is available on iOS from £7.99 per month and can be downloaded from the App Store.



Classes are designed to help users rewire their brains to sleep better, stress less, be more energised and feel happier

Users can access 100s of engaging classes via the MindLabs app

What's your personal vision?

Fundamentally, we want to create a world where looking after your mind is as normal as going to the gym.

We're excited to be the new face of change. Our team of neuroscience and mindfulness experts lead classes based on research, making techniques that previously felt out of reach, practicable and understandable.

It's time for people to reclaim mental wellness and bring tools like meditation into the mainstream, with a science-first approach. We want to empower everyone with the tools to take better care of their minds.

And your team?

My team believes that the relationship people build with their instructors are fundamental to the experience of a mindfulness class, and the subsequent result it has when it comes to changing your brain through neuroplasticity.

Video content gives us the opportunity to truly connect with users, even when we're not in the same

physical environment, and that's something the industry should truly be prioritising, especially as the pandemic has increased isolation and feelings of loneliness.

Just as you might lift weights in the gym or have a specific physical exercise regime, MindLabs is a daily tool to strengthen neural pathways that lead to better concentration, improved presence and self-awareness and more positive thinking patterns. ●

More: www.wearemindlabs.com

Adnan Ebrahim interview courtesy of *Fit Tech* – the sister magazine of *HCM* – and managing editor, Steph Eaves

Get more fit tech news: sign up for free digital magazines and news feeds at www.FitTechglobal.com/signup



Xponential Fitness launches X Pass aggregator

Xponential Fitness has launched X Pass, a package that allows US subscribers to book classes across its entire portfolio of brands, essentially aggregating its own portfolio.

X Pass is being marketed as a first-of-its-kind model, offering consumers the opportunity to discover all the group's brands.

The move comes as Xponential starts to achieve the critical mass needed to be able to offer a wide portfolio of boutique types in enough



Xponential Fitness

Xponential owns a diversified platform of 10 boutique fitness brands



LUNA/PAUL/ALAN

We're excited to officially roll the platform out on a national scale.

Sarah Luna

locations to make the service an attractive proposition and is likely to be emulated by other operators looking to scale and diversify.

It mirrors the kind of booking and loyalty schemes being in multi-brand hotel groups.

Those signing up will be able to search for boutique studios near

them – or search for studios in any city during their travels.

Sarah Luna, president of Xponential, said: "After seeing great success with X Pass in test markets, we're excited to officially roll the platform out on a national scale."

More: http://lei.sr/U3x6g_H

The Gym Group reveals profit forecast



THE GYM GROUP

The Gym Group broke the 200-club barrier at the end of 2021

The Gym Group has published its full-year results for 2021 and announced plans to open 28 new sites in 2022, including three gyms acquired this month from Fitness First in Haringey, Leytonstone and Romford, strengthening its clusters of properties in this part of the UK.

The Gym Group broke the 200-club barrier at the end of 2021, opening 15 clubs in the second half of the year alone, all of which are trading well, according to CEO, Richard Darwin. He said roll-out plans are accelerating as recovery continues and that he sees a "clear path to 300 sites over the next two to three years."

Twenty leases are already signed for 2022 and The Gym Group has a rollout target of 25-30 clubs a year for 2023 and 2024.



THE GYM GROUP

We expect to be back in profit by 2023, as we rebuild from the shock of the pandemic

Richard Darwin

Speaking to HCM, Darwin said he expects to the group to be back in profit by 2023, as the company rebuilds from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This recovery will be critical to enable fast growth," Darwin said.

More: http://lei.sr/6Z5z3_H

Basic-Fit to enter German market with 20 clubs

Basic-Fit has revealed plans to enter the German fitness market during 2022.

The European fitness giant said it will begin construction on the initial locations during the first half of the year, opening during the second half and plans to open up to 20 clubs by the end of 2022.

Longer term, Basic-Fit said it sees the potential of having 600 clubs in the country.

CEO Rene Moos said the German expansion is part of ambitious growth plans for the chain, which could see it operating 3,500 clubs by 2030.

"We see a bright future for value-for-money fitness and the Basic-Fit proposition in particular," Moos said.

"In November, we announced our intention of accelerating club openings



BASIC-FIT

In total, we expect to be able to open 600 clubs in Germany in the coming years

Rene Moos

from 200 to 300 a year, with the aim of growing to 2,000 clubs by 2025.

"We expect to open the first German clubs in the second half of this year. In total, we expect to be able to open 600 clubs in Germany in the coming years."

More: http://lei.sr/P7S8m_H



Basic-fit will open in Germany this year

Global Wellness Day reminds the world to choose joy

Global Wellness Day (GWD) headquarters has revealed #ThinkMagenta as the theme of its 2022 event scheduled for 11 June.

Originally launched in 2012, the non-profit event, founded by Belgin Aksoy, encourages people all over the world to champion the power of wellness. The event sees a range of free health and wellness activities held for the public.

Since its inception, GWD has grown from being celebrated in one country



GLOBALEVENTS

In 2022, Global Wellness Day will invite people to #ThinkMagenta



GWD

#ThinkMagenta is not about being optimistic, it's about being realistic

Belgin Aksoy

to being observed in 170 countries in tens of thousands of locations.

In 2022, GWD will invite people to #ThinkMagenta, recommending simple but effective affirmations, reminding people that living well begins in the mind.

"#ThinkMagenta is not about being optimistic, it's about being realistic," explains Aksoy, "things happen in

our lives and we have the choice to call them good or bad things.

"Sometimes difficulties, failures or illnesses become the greatest teachers. No matter what is happening we can always find a way to choose joy."

● Sign up to get involved at www.globalwellnessday.org

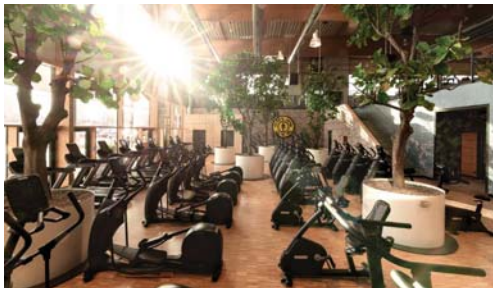
More: http://lei.sr/a9j5x_H

Activity sector launches drive to net-zero

The UK health, fitness and activity sector is ramping up its sustainability drive to net-zero with the launch of a new alliance called the Sport Environment and Climate Coalition (SECC).

The new body will support the sector to de-carbonise – a challenge that has assumed great importance since the start of the war in Ukraine and the accompanying increase in energy prices.

The first challenge will be to assess the current level of awareness,



Gold's Gym Berlin is carbon neutral, with solar and user-generated power



The sector has a responsibility to address sustainability challenges

Huw Edwards

understanding and action on climate change and environmental sustainability. Following this, the SECC will then pinpoint what support is needed to create long-term change.

An ambitious roadmap will then set out how the transformation to net-zero can be achieved across the industry.

Huw Edwards, chief executive of UK Active, said: "The sport and physical activity sector has a responsibility to help address the environmental and sustainability challenges facing our planet. We're proud to be part of the SECC."

More: http://lei.sr/s6g5t_H

Bannatyne to spend £1m on Leeds wellness club



Spa facilities will include 10 treatment rooms and extensive wet areas

Bannatyne Group will spend £1m on upgrading the wellness elements at its Cardigan Fields health club in Leeds, with plans including a new spa... Construction work at the Kirkstall Road site is due to be completed in June 2022 as part of an overhaul project, which has already seen the addition of a new café bar and interactive fitness studio to the health club's offering.

Once complete, the 10-treatment-room spa will provide a relaxing venue for guests to enjoy treatments supplied by British skincare brand Elemis.

Duncan Bannatyne, chief executive and chair at the Bannatyne Group, said: "Our aim with this programme of investment is to offer members



Our aim is to offer members and guests an all-encompassing wellbeing facility

Duncan Bannatyne

and guests an all-encompassing health and wellbeing facility, with a café, gym, wet-side facilities and spa all in one location.

"We have some fantastic brand partners and I'm certain members will be impressed with the new spa."

More: http://lei.sr/p9k7N_H

Blok gears up to scale with £3.75m funding

Boutique operator, Blok, has secured £3.75m in pre-Series A bridge funding to drive the growth of its business, which includes hybrid studios and a digital fitness platform.

The funding round was led by ACF Investors, with additional cash coming from Elcot Capital, The Santon Group and the UK government's Future Fund.

Crowdcube and angel investor, Rob Wirszyc, have also contributed, with Wirszyc joining the board as chair.

Founded in 2016 by Ed and Reema Stanbury and friend Max Oppenheim, Blok began as a boxing and yoga space with an initial site in Clapton, London and has a focus on cross-discipline training in beautiful spaces. Blok offers 500 live classes a week, as well as 60 online live classes.



This investment will accelerate our growth and enable us to reach more people

Ed Stanbury

CEO, Ed Stanbury, said: "Our hybrid model caters directly for customers and the growing demand for personalised fitness and wellbeing, accessed from anywhere. This investment will accelerate our growth and enable us to reach more people."

More: http://lei.sr/6U5X4_H



Blok operates a hybrid fitness model

TRIB3 sets sights on US expansion

TTRIB3 is making a play for the lucrative US fitness market.

The franchised boutique operator has become a member of the International Franchise Association (IFA), which will facilitate and support its plans to take its franchising model into the US.

TRIB3 currently has studios in the UK, Spain, Netherlands, Ireland and Finland and has secured franchise deals for more than 60 sites.

As part of the plans, the company has also appointed Rob Barker – who



Trib3 has plans for rapid global expansion, with clubs already open in Europe

recently announced his departure from Precor and Peloton – as a non-executive director.

The US move follows Trib3's decision earlier this year to move into the London boutique market.

The brand has opened a studio in Ealing, West London and the 36-trainer capacity site features the brand's signature TRI training system.

The moves are part of Trib3's plan to expand across the globe.

The company is currently driving its overseas growth with new openings in Spain and the Netherlands.

Trib3 CEO, Kevin Yates, said: "Our expansion is really flying in the UK and we've got exciting global plans."

More: http://lei.sr/A2Q5W_H



Our expansion is really flying in the UK and we've got exciting global plans

Kevin Yates

Exercise and sports bras in ONS 'basket of goods'

Consumers' growing interest in exercise, health and wellness have been highlighted by changes to the UK government's inflationary measures, with sportswear and healthy food in the ascendance and participation in exercise and activity making its first-ever appearance.

Inflation is calculated based on a 'basket of goods' which is selected to reflect the general purchasing preferences of the general population.

In publishing the new basket for 2022, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has acknowledged for the first time that "recreational and sporting services are under-represented" and as a result, has added a climbing session.

The ONS says the choice of climbing to represent the activity sector reflects its "increased popularity".

Sports bras and cropped tops have also been included for the first time, showing how much fitness has been embraced by households during the pandemic.



Climbing, crop tops and sports bras have been added to the inflationary basket

"Heightened awareness of fitness has seen a rise in expenditure on sports clothing," said the ONS.

The choice of female workout gear over male can also be seen as a nod to how much traction women's fitness has gained over the last few years.

"Heightened awareness of fitness generally together with the focus of the coronavirus pandemic has seen a rise in expenditure on sports clothing,"

Office of National Statistics

More: http://lei.sr/5R5u5_H

Nuffield and Access Sport to tackle inequalities



The partnership aims to bring young people into community activities

Nuffield Health will use the power of sport to tackle the stark health inequalities across Greater Manchester.

The healthcare charity has partnered with Access Sport for a ground-breaking project, which will combine resources and expertise in order to improve the lives of 15,000 disadvantaged local young people and their families over the next two years.

The partnership aims to bring young people into community sport, provide access to Nuffield Health's Manchester Institute of Health & Performance to experience sporting opportunities, teach children to cycle and inspire the next generation of community leaders.

Manchester has almost double the number of children under 16 living in poverty – when compared with the



Steve Grey

rest of England – and a significantly higher percentage of children aged 10 to 11 who have excess weight.

Brendan Street, Head of Charity, from Nuffield Health added: "We're partnering with Access Sport to improve health inequalities, sporting provision, employability skills, and social mobility in Greater Manchester."

More: http://lei.sr/Jf6M5p_H

Industry unites to send support to Ukraine

Health and fitness operators, wellness brands and other industry organisations wanting to help the aid efforts in Ukraine have been sharing contacts for charities needing financial support.

Industry body, UK Active, said it has been contacted by members wanting to help: "We stand with the people, families and children impacted by the conflict," UK Active told HCM. "We advise any of our members that would like to offer help to Ukraine at this incredibly difficult time, to make a financial donation to one or more of the nine humanitarian charities we've identified who are working on the ground in Ukraine. ● To make a donation, you can link to the UK Active charities at: www.hcmmag.com/UKAUkraine.

UK Active's call was echoed by Europe Active, whose CEO, Andreas Paulsen, said: "We're encouraging all industry actors to donate to the Red Cross special mission in Ukraine. We also received a request from Ukrainian industry body, Ukraine Active, to donate to a foundation it has set up to facilitate humanitarian aid.

"I'm extremely moved our sector is coming together in this extraordinary situation and that European society at large is coming together, understanding the need for collaboration, unity, and standing up for the values that ultimately define our very sense of meaning in life," said Paulsen.

- www.hcmmag.com/EAUkraine
- www.hcmmag.com/UkraineActive

More: http://lei.sr/9W5N2_H



UK Active and Europe Active are sharing contacts for donations

David Beckham partners latest F45 gym

David Beckham has been named as a partner in a newly-opened F45 studio in London, as part of the franchised fitness operator's plans to highlight its UK expansion push.

Beckham – the former England football captain – has become a high-profile entrepreneur and football club owner since hanging up his boots. He joined F45 as an investor in 2021 and is playing a key role in the company's brand marketing initiatives and supporting its expansion globally.



Beckham has been named as a partner in the new 3,500sq ft studio



I've seen this site at various stages of the build and the team have done a phenomenal job

David Beckham

Now, he's fronting this latest UK opening to promote the brand to both consumers and potential new franchisees.

The new 3,500sq ft studio is located on Kensington High Street and will be run by multi-unit franchise owners Haydn Elliott and Tristan Smith, who also operate sites in Oxford Circus and Soho.

Beckham said: "As a global partner and investor in the F45 franchise, I'm thrilled to see how fast the brand is growing in the UK fitness market.

"I've seen this site at various stages of the build and the F45 team have done a phenomenal job in creating a fantastic studio."

More: http://lei.sr/F9u4B_H



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Paulsen says a whole new strategy was born out of the pandemic

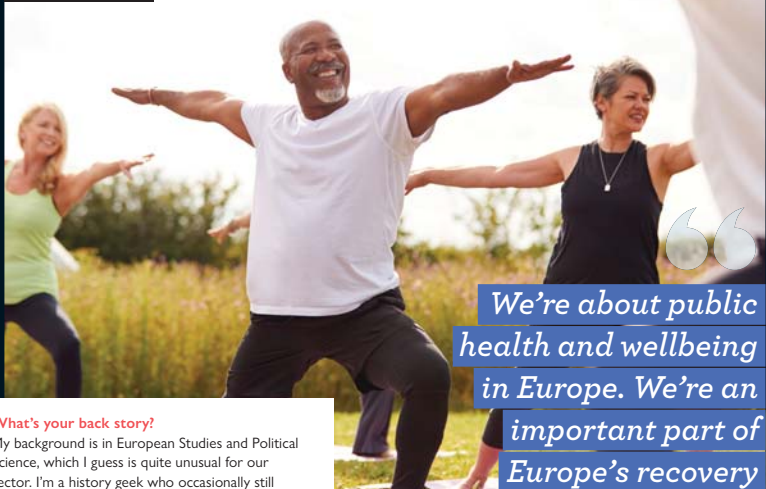
PHOTO: EUROPE ACTIVE

ANDREAS

PAULSEN

Europe Active has reinvented itself over the last two years, rallying the European sector around a common purpose, putting in the groundwork to support its public health agenda and opening itself up to global collaboration. Its CEO talks to Kate Cracknell

Positioning the sector as a public health solution is key



We're about public health and wellbeing in Europe. We're an important part of Europe's recovery

What's your back story?

My background is in European Studies and Political Science, which I guess is quite unusual for our sector. I'm a history geek who occasionally still teaches political philosophy on the side and I've spent a lot of time in political circles.

However, in 2011 I had an opportunity to launch a new medical fitness concept with a group of physiotherapists, becoming MD of an operation called Fit&Sund. It now has about 40 clubs, but back then we were starting out and were looking for objective standards for our personal trainer qualifications. I came across the European Health & Fitness Association (EHFA) – as Europe Active was then known – and ran its standards past my Fit & Sund co-founders: a couple of academics, a medical doctor, a PhD in exercise physiology and a very high-level physiotherapist.

We all agreed they were good, so FIT&Sund joined up in 2011 – I became vice-chair of the Standards Council in 2012 and joined the board in 2015.

When the Europe Active leadership changed in 2019, the board asked David Stalker and me to take over; I became acting president in 2019 and was appointed CEO in April 2020.

Dave and I work well together, and with the Europe Active team, and in early 2020 we defined a strategy that not only addressed the immediate challenges, but also the longer-term and where we wanted to take both the sector and Europe Active.

And the immediate challenge was COVID-19?

Yes. We basically started flying this plane through a thunderstorm.

I care a lot about Europe Active and the national associations that are part of it, though, and I recalled Churchill's words: 'Never let a good crisis go to waste.' When everything is up in the air, provided you have a strong enough mission, momentum and the right resources behind you, there's a real chance for change.

I was determined that we'd make the best of it, so we used COVID as a window of opportunity to get the mandate from our supporters and our board to fundamentally transform things. The organisation had been set up by industry people, which I deeply respect, with the best of intentions but limited resources; it seemed like the right time to turn the page and become a proper trade association, a federation in Brussels, so we would have the right set-up for the future.

We rebuilt from within, establishing departments, clear responsibilities, separation of powers, new governance structures, transparency standards and so on.

We created a strong sense of purpose within the association. Our team understood the gravity of the situation, of course, but we also ensured they understood the great opportunity of the situation – that if we provided the right support to our small and medium-sized members and stakeholders, ▶

► in particular, we could have a tremendously positive impact, helping them through the crisis.

We drove home the notion that ours isn't just any sector. We're about public health and wellbeing in Europe, and an important part of Europe's recovery. And as a trade association, Europe Active is the existential backbone of that sector. We have to be there when people are struggling out in the field.

Understanding this was an important part of getting through the crisis. I believe the associations that came successfully through the pandemic – even expanding and building their momentum – were the ones that were able to create a sense of purpose around which their national sectors united.

What shape is Europe Active in now?

It may sound strange to say, as COVID has been terrible in so many ways, but I think it actually

made it easier to be a trade association, provided you did it right. It made our value clearer than ever as the uniting force in the European sector, speaking to governments with one voice, sharing resources, creating common objectives and ultimately getting through it together.

And we came through it pretty well, even expanding our team and, with the help of some of the big players in our sector, investing in new projects such as the European DataHub and the new FitCert.eu standards (www.hcmmag.com/FitCert).

I'm hugely grateful to Dave Stalker as my close partner on this journey, and to the board and team of Europe Active for the way they came together.

I'm also grateful to the larger national associations in our network, who have shared their expertise with the smaller associations. We've grown our European community of national associations

Fitcert.eu is a quality mark aimed at driving up industry standards

Trade associations are expected to collaborate, not compete. We're expected to show respect for our supporters by spending their resources as wisely as possible



Building community
is one of the key aims
of Europe Active

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES

from 16 to 31 over the space of two years, and ukactive and other well-established national associations had been able to position our sector as a public health solution – the likelihood of crippling restrictions was lower than in countries where we're still seen as traditional fitness, sport and leisure.

What sort of impact?

Even in the depths of the crisis, we were already able to see how – in countries where the national associations had been able to position our sector as a public health solution – the likelihood of crippling restrictions was lower than in countries where we're still seen as traditional fitness, sport and leisure.

If there's one word that's going to be even more important to our journey in the coming years than 'health', it's 'essential'. During COVID we realised that if you're seen as an essential service, politicians will go a long way to keep you open.

And we've had some successes here already. Germany had its election last year, of course, and its new government programme mentions our sector as being essential to public health and physical activity levels. We've had official recognition by health authorities in the UK, Denmark, Netherlands and the region of Madrid too, but Germany's is the clearest, most official, high-level example so far. And it's important because it will spill into policy initiatives across Europe.

Meanwhile, at the launch of the European Week of Sport in Slovenia last September, Mariya Gabriel, the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth



European commissioner
Mariya Gabriel

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ALEXANDROS NIOULLOS

recognised our sector as essential and important to physical activity in Europe for the first time.

How do we capitalise on this?

There's a bright future beyond COVID, and we're getting into that future as we speak. As populations age and are negatively affected by contemporary unhealthy lifestyles, healthcare systems will have to be fundamentally reformed towards preventative health. Countries simply won't be able to afford them otherwise.

If our sector positions itself correctly, we will be recognised as an important part of that preventative healthcare mix.

This is the most important thing that we can do politically in the coming years, because there's far more money and resources in health than in sport and leisure. Sport and leisure of course ▶



If we significantly increase access to regular exercise for citizens of all backgrounds, what impact would that have on crime rates in this community?

- are fine – that's where we have our historical roots – but to get beyond 10 and 20 per cent market penetration to 40, 50 per cent and beyond, we need to be considered public health. We need to be seen as essential to physical activity levels in Europe. That's why it's so important to climb up that list – that ladder of essentiality.

Put another way, while there's nothing wrong per se in aesthetically defining fitness, our biggest value to society cannot be aesthetically defined. It's defined by the positive effect of health-enhancing physical activity on physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

That's why a core topic at this year's European Health and Fitness Forum in Cologne is the importance of building your business on health rather than sport and leisure – why this holds more promise for the future in terms of attracting more consumers, increasing societal impact and positively being on the radar of politicians.

As associations, we need to take this preventative health stance now, then encourage operators to make gradual changes. I'm not at all saying that clubs have to cut all ties with their history, but we need to keep moving forward in our messaging.

We also need to be willing to look at ourselves self-critically. When meeting with external stakeholders – political stakeholders, for example – we have to listen to their critique instead of just rejecting it. Once we understand why politicians look at us in a certain way, we can address any genuine issues and educate where perceptions are incorrect.

What's the rationale behind your new club standards?

Our new FitCert.eu standards are about getting ready for business after COVID. We've previously had standards for people: our industry's exercise professionals. FitCert.eu represents our first firm standards for places of business: a four-

A Europe-wide quality assurance system will improve sector skills



The European DataHub is gathering valuable consumer data from and for the whole sector

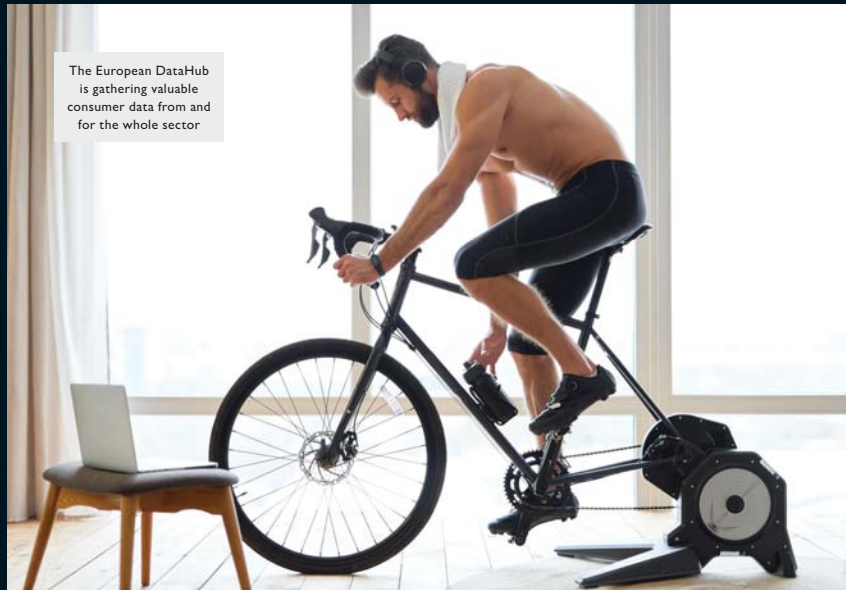


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/PREMIERSTOCK

stage quality assurance system where quality assurers are actually out there assisting clubs in improving the standards of their facilities.

The average well-managed club in Europe will be totally fine in this new system, but the point is that it isn't just based on trust. There's on-the-ground quality assurance.

Some of it is obligatory, elsewhere we make recommendations. The objective is to secure a minimum standard and at the same time inspire our sector for the future, showing operators how our fitness and health clubs should develop in the coming years.

We've been positively surprised by how quickly some of the major operators have responded, with the likes of BasicFit, Pure Gym, Gym Group, David Lloyd Leisure, Solinca, Urban Fit, Fit & Sund, EVO, FitForFree, SportCity and GoFIT – together with some smaller operators – investing to become frontrunners in this scheme.

In our pilot, just under 300 clubs from nine European countries – Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the UK – will complete stage two, with our sampling conducted according to international standards, that means the whole estate is then accredited based on the sample. It means the pilot actually represents over 1,800 clubs across nine

markets. We expect these standards to become the norm over the coming decade, with insurance companies and even government regulatory bodies taking them into account when they regulate our sector or issue insurance policies.

Are there any other new initiatives you'd like to mention?

I'd like to talk about the European DataHub, which we launched with 4Global last year to cost-effectively provide instant, reliable data for our sector. Predominantly covering the commercial sector in Europe, it's one of our biggest investments ever and has been made possible by members of Europe Active's President's Councils, who've been incredibly supportive during the pandemic.

Data comes in directly from digital sources across our ecosystem – our members' digital platforms and software – and can be used to monitor customer behaviours, for example. We'll be able to see increases and decreases in memberships and how consumers and members of clubs shift between offerings; if it had been live during Omicron, we'd have been able to immediately see how many members we lost as a result, rather than having to manually draw down this data.

It's about securing reliable data and research on which to base our decisions and business

- models, rather than gut feel. It's also about better resourcing our public affairs initiatives, making sure the right arguments get to the right politicians and decision-making authorities.

For example – in partnership with universities represented on the Scientific Advisory Board of our new research unit, Think Active – we'll be doing some socio-economic modelling on the data. The goal will be to better understand our sector's social impact, asking questions such as: 'If we significantly increase access to regular exercise for citizens of all backgrounds, what impact would that have on crime rates in this community?'

That, of course, requires other sets of data to be combined with ours, but doing this will allow us to far better demonstrate the direct and indirect impact of our sector in society. That's what we want to do in the coming years, putting this knowledge into the hands of our public affairs people to, in turn, take to political stakeholders.

Would deeper global collaboration be beneficial?

During the pandemic, a lot of trade associations around the world not only grew stronger but also began to collaborate more closely than ever before. As a result, there's now an informal network of associations around the world and I believe we have a unique opportunity to formalise that this year, turning it into a federation of associations that speaks with one voice globally.

If this happens, it should be a democratic body, not a semi-commercial business. It should be completely transparent and accountable – a forum of peers sitting around a table representing their respective continents and regions.

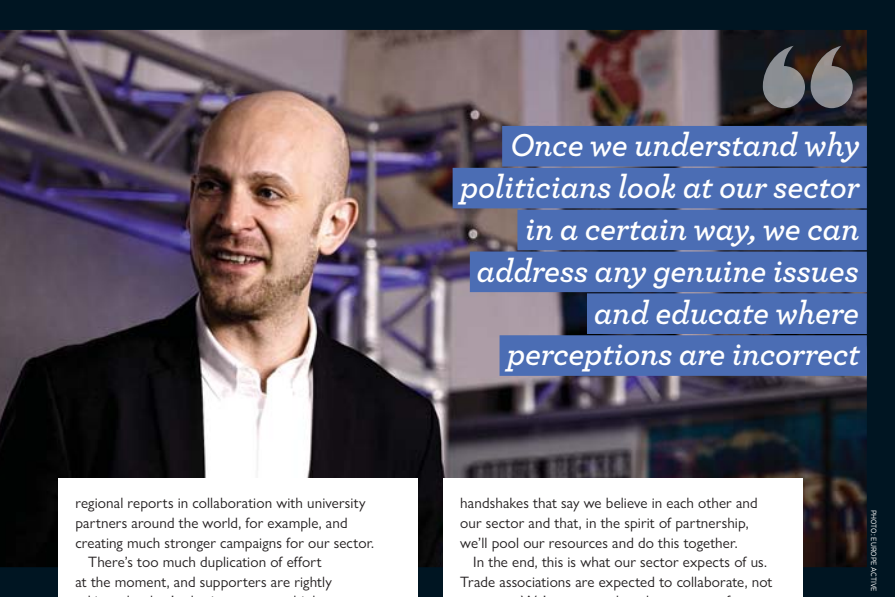
In this federation, Europe Active would represent Europe; I consider Europe to be my country and I don't have any global ambitions beyond doing good for the whole sector. My ambitions for Europe Active are simply this: to improve the image of our sector, making sure we become a public health solution in the eyes of the majority of our societies; and to represent the European sector in the best way possible at the global table, including helping like-minded partners across the world.

So for me, a global federation represents a wonderful opportunity to help others – up-and-coming African associations, for example. I'd love to see a formal system for sharing resources and best practice.

It would also allow us to pool resources to achieve far greater impact: funding global rather than

Developing digital insights is a major priority





“

Once we understand why politicians look at our sector in a certain way, we can address any genuine issues and educate where perceptions are incorrect

regional reports in collaboration with university partners around the world, for example, and creating much stronger campaigns for our sector.

There's too much duplication of effort at the moment, and supporters are rightly asking why they're having to pay multiple organisations to push the same global agenda.

From our perspective, we're very happy to share. We already did so freely during COVID. We just want to do it in a fair way, with the same open spirit of collegiality across the board. Any federation must be based on trust and mutual respect:

handshakes that say we believe in each other and our sector and that, in the spirit of partnership, we'll pool our resources and do this together.

In the end, this is what our sector expects of us. Trade associations are expected to collaborate, not compete. We're expected to show respect for our supporters by spending their resources as wisely as possible. We're expected to be places of peace and representation that gather the entire ecosystem around agenda points that are common to everyone. I firmly hope, and indeed believe, that the formalisation of this global federation will happen. ●

PHOTO: EUROPE ACTIVE

EUROPE ACTIVE: HORIZON 2025 STRATEGY

“Our vision and mission are unchanged since 2019/20,” says EuropeActive CEO Andreas Paulsen. “Our mission remains to promote the interests of all organisations that work towards getting more people, more active, more often, while our vision is to be the leading European voice for our sector.

“What's new is our strategy and work programme for 2022–25 – a plan entitled *Moving Forward Together* – which builds on our mission and vision and aims to concretely fulfill the goals of our *Horizon 2025 Sectoral Manifesto*.

“There's an introduction that covers some of the paradigm shifts, such as becoming a public health solution and securing reliable data we can put into the hands of our public affairs resources. The document is then divided into chapters, each representing one of Europe Active's departments.

“Member Services covers how we look after members, especially in the commercial area, including events. Educational Services importantly covers research for the sector, standards, accreditation, quality-assurance and our strategy for upskilling our sector's workforce. The EU and Public Affairs chapter

addresses our general public affairs objectives, as well as how we step up and align our political representation and policy efforts in Brussels and in the national capitals of Europe, while Projects and Programmes looks at the EU-funded and EU-supported projects we either coordinate or are a partner in digitalisation, inclusion, environmental sustainability, education and skills, and so on.

Admin and Finance is mostly internally-focused, but in the name of transparency we want to show all Europe Active members and stakeholders how we're going about building the best trade association team in the world.” ●

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ALAN STODOL

DELIVERING DIGITAL

Four operators share their insights into how Technogym's Mywellness has transformed their operations, as well as customer and team engagement

Embracing digital software solutions has become increasingly important when it comes to delivering the very best personalised training experiences seamlessly and efficiently.

Launched in 2012, Mywellness has led the way in the wellness sector as the digital solution offering complete lifestyle management for health club members.

At its centre is the Mywellness App, that health and wellness operators can customise to promote services and deliver content. Mywellness allows operators to set up services and content, making it the CRM platform for managing customers when it comes to surveys, tests, body analysis, equipment, training plans and class timetables, as well as configuring the customer journey that's proposed to each different member profile: programmes, services, the interaction of the staff with the member, and automatic notifications in the app.

The launch of Mywellness 6.0

Mywellness has been further enhanced, with the launch of version 6.0, giving access to services that can be used anywhere and anytime, such as live classes, on-demand workouts and PT sessions offered in streaming.

Andrew Brown, Durham Country Council

Durham County Council has launched Mywellness Live and On-Demand, as well as using Mywellness to cover wellbeing and leisure programmes. "Gyms will always be part of life," says Andrew Brown, the council's principal physical activity manager of wellbeing. "But the way people engage with leisure services is changing. Having the Technogym Live and On-Demand service gives our community another way to stay active. It's flexible and adaptable, which is exactly what people want."

Having the Technogym Live and On-Demand service gives our community another way to stay active

The project has helped the team at Durham learn about communicating with a digital-hungry audience.

"We're very grateful to Technogym for providing such a user-friendly platform and for providing so much guidance and support to make the steps of this journey such a success," says Brown.

Mywellness 6.0 gives access to digital services that can be used anywhere and anytime



Overall, Mywellness has everything we need to support retention and engagement

CASE STUDY TWO

Paula Vincent, Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL)

An advocate of Mywellness for many years, Stevenage Leisure Limited has a big focus on digital programming and engagement to offer personalised and trackable programmes.

"Our key priority is to find ways to create a sense of community and engagement with members," says Paula Vincent, corporate fitness manager at SLL.

"Technogym's 'Prescribe' programme on Mywellness is a great asset for our trainers, as it enables them to digitally prescribe a programme to members, empowering us to make adaptations to a members programme with ease and allowing trainers to monitor progress," she says.

"'Challenge' is a great tool to create digital challenges across individual sites or across all facilities. With good marketing to create awareness it's so easy – all members have to do is join via the Mywellness App and they can participate, whether that be via moves, calories, distances or visits."

She continues: "Overall, Mywellness has everything we need to support retention and engagement. It's a digital solution that allows us to not only support our members in achieving their goals, but also to monitor and set goals for our teams to enable them to support members throughout all their interactions."

The latest evolution of Mywellness gives us the ability to deliver a hybrid model

CASE STUDY THREE

Alice Hulley, Waterside Leisure

Alice Hulley, leisure director at Waterside Leisure says the club's entire member journey is delivered through Mywellness and it really boosts their user experience.

"Gym members can scan QR codes on all the Technogym equipment, connecting their personal profile and receiving tailored video demos and training advice," says Hulley.

For Waterside, it's important for members to stay connected to the club all the time and thanks to Mywellness, we can actually encourage the tracking and recording of members' outdoors activities.

"The latest evolution of Mywellness adds the ability to deliver a hybrid model, making products and services accessible both in the club and remotely," confirms Hulley.

"Mywellness is an extra touchpoint in our member journey and means we can offer people a one-stop solution for tracking their fitness data, activity, and health stats. It's also invaluable for overseeing progress and making informed changes to programming," she says. "Mywellness has made our member journey more streamlined, improved the communication between staff and members, significantly increasing overall engagement."

CASE STUDY FOUR

Andy Logan, Village Gyms

"Village Gyms' entire member journey is now hosted through Mywellness," says Andy Logan, national leisure operations manager. "When members accounts are activated, they can book classes, swim sessions, inductions and reviews."

With the new addition of Technogym Live and On-Demand, members can also access on-demand classes from home, while Village Gyms has also added its own on-demand content, external links to popular third-party

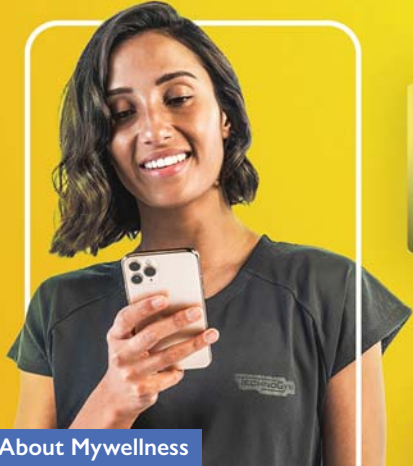
Making the move to Technogym for our digital offer created a complete 'start-to-finish' customer journey

classes and a Village Gym merchandise store. "The flexibility of the Mywellness app over our previous in-house option has been key to the success of our digital journey," says Logan. "Technogym understands operators want to put their own stamp on digital, but need it to be simple and user-friendly. Our in-house app didn't have anything like this level of creativity or functionality."

"We have Technogym in our gyms, so it's an ecosystem members recognise," he says. "Making this move for digital has created a complete 'start-to-finish' customer journey."



Member input can be tracked in and out of the club



About Mywellness

Here are just a few examples of the many services that can be booked, used and/or purchased directly from the Mywellness App...

Booking and payments all-in-one

Sell your professional services and products easily to boost your reach and revenues. Attract new leads, increase secondary spend and make your offering accessible to more customers.

Personalised training experience

From assessment to exercise prescription, support customers with highly-personalised workouts and interactions, driven by a complete suite of professional digital products available on every touchpoint.

Retain and motivate customers

Engage users with challenges that create a sense of community, and motivate them with AI-driven notifications. Retain more customers by rewarding their results and celebrating achievements.

Superior group training experiences

Seamlessly manage your group exercise offering from any device. Save time and deliver unparalleled training experiences.

Analyse and improve your performance

Monitor KPIs, gain user insights and make informed decisions faster to improve business performance and customer experience, thanks to Mywellness analytics.

In touch with your audience 24/7

Make your business accessible 24/7, beyond your facility walls and normal operating hours.



Stay in touch with your audience through the Mywellness App and widgets for your website that promote and sell your products and services.

Power your hybrid model

Sell class packages and subscriptions. Get direct feedback on your classes and trainers. Let your members experience the energy of your classes in your facility, at home and anywhere they are, on any of their devices.

Pay-per-use

Boost revenue by enabling prospects and customers to purchase your most engaging group training experiences, class packages and subscriptions.

Mywellness for Fitness Boutiques

Attract new leads selling your classes with Mywellness, allowing you to offer superior group training experiences in facility and online.

Strive for 5-star experiences

Continuously improve your class experience delivery by encouraging your customers to rate both the class and the instructor afterwards.

Your classes, live and on-demand, on any device

Mywellness helps you create group training experiences both on-site and online, through live and on-demand content delivery. Today's users can enjoy classes directly from a web browser and smart TVs, as well as the Mywellness mobile app.



Total Fitness Wilmslow
— proudly mid-market

PHOTO: TOTAL FITNESS

Everyone's talking about The mid market

There are signs the mid-market is back with a vengeance.
Or did it never go away? Kath Hudson reports on the latest iteration
of the space that sits between low cost and boutiques

For a while the mid-market became an uncomfortable place to operate. With the advent of low cost players in the late noughties, there was a lot of buzz around the concept of bargainous memberships, no contracts, a 24/7 offering and aggressive rollouts.

The likes of The Gym Group and Pure Gym were arriving in a neighbourhood and luring away members who liked something new and shiny and who didn't use the pool.

Then the sexy boutiques came along, with luxury environments, niche offerings and specialised advice and suddenly many mid-market operators

found they were too generic for a segmented market.

A number of mid-market independents, who hadn't reinvested and didn't know their USP, went to the wall. The mid-market giants endured tough times too: Fitness First was sold to DW Fitness and parts of LA Fitness to Pure Gym. Virgin Active had to restructure, selling a third of its estate to focus on its higher-end family and racquet clubs, and Bannatyne headed upmarket by developing more of a wellness offering by integrating with its spa division.

There was a definite feeling in the industry that mid-market was an undesirable label and many

operators were keen to disassociate themselves from this space.

However, by 2018, independents were popping up, proud to call themselves mid-market, saying it was a market no one was dominating. They were picking up members who were trading up from low cost – wanting a club where they could get more attention and advice – and trading down from high-end clubs, which were either too expensive or where they didn't use all the facilities.

Now the budget operators are nudging up prices with upsells as well, so is the mid-market still 'squeezed' or has it become viable again? We ask the experts...



It's about having the right value proposition, as opposed to questions of price and location

Sophie Lawler

Total Fitness

Ever since I took my first fitness job as a part-time fitness coach in a local authority leisure centre in Manchester, I've always been an advocate of the middle market. Since fitness is so universal in its appeal, I believe there's room for providers at every level of the market.

While the middle may sound less attractive from a strategic perspective, it doesn't make it any less important. Some might suggest the middle has suffered historically and I recognise this point of view,

as so many of the middle market operators that were prevalent in the 2000s aren't around anymore or have moved position. However, I don't believe this indicated a lack of importance of the middle market, but more one of relevance and/or the desire for existing chains to differentiate from what was a new low-cost segment.

Total Fitness has always been both highly differentiated and a clear middle-market provider – by nature of the sheer size and scale of our clubs and our intent to provide as much value as possible to the communities we serve.

During the build back, we've demonstrated an astonishing demand for our product, both before and since the pandemic, giving us real confidence for the future. In the year preceding the first lockdown our memberships grew by 10 per cent, and since re-opening in April 2021, we've consistently delivered two to three times the historic joiner average every month.

We've also noticed some trends in our new joiners – including a high volume of joiners from low-cost clubs who are seeking both space and greater variety. Also, we're seeing a greater volume of joiners from younger and lower-income groups, suggesting we're seeing a shift in the relative value of fitness.

When it comes to mid-market – or any market segment – it's about having the right value proposition, as opposed to questions of price and location. Typically, the value of your product grows significantly when you add a swimming offering into the mix, which is often where the line from low to mid-market is crossed.

There's always been a place for the mid-market, as fitness is universal and it's our role as a unified sector to provide choice to our communities at a proportionate value for the offer.

There's room for fitness providers in all segments, says Lawler



The mid-market segment is willing to invest in facilities and expertise

Lee Matthews

Fitness First

We'd argue the mid-market isn't back – it never went away. Fitness First was pushed into what became the mid-market some 12 years ago when the low-cost operators emerged. We already had competitors in the luxury end of the market, so we had to re-evaluate our total proposition and our point of difference needed to change. That included consolidation of our estate and the locations we believed would be successful in the future. There is a very clear place for mid-market gyms to succeed if the value proposition is relevant for the customer base targeted.

Now the pandemic is hopefully coming towards an end, and the devastating effect of isolation on the nation has become evident, there's a need for the support and expertise which full-service clubs deliver. This includes the additional support on hand from in-club teams and the extra facilities, such as wet facilities, in-gym boutique experiences and higher-spec equipment, which mid-market clubs offer. Health is wealth, and we're seeing a new set of members coming through our doors, alongside the return of our most loyal members.

While the pricing and promotional strategy is always important, it's not the mid-market's key driver. It's about the value delivered, and the service levels which go above our core offering: a motivating environment,

high quality and on-trend equipment, a wide genre of classes, PT and digital content. This is underpinned with the most important part of our offering – our people. Having qualified teams on hand at all times, recruiting the best PTs and class instructors, and continuing their development via our certification journeys enables us to deliver a leading experience.

Our core customers are young professionals who value human interaction, the varied product offering and expect inspirational and fun fitness experiences. This segment is willing to invest, from a time and money perspective, in the facilities and expertise available to them, surrounded by a community of like-minded members. We see this trend even more in younger generations where the gym is a place to socialise as well as train.

Our customers value human interaction, says Matthews

PHOTO: FITNESS FIRST

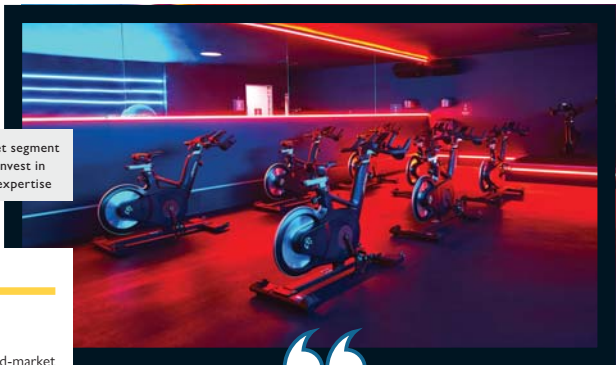


PHOTO: FITNESS FIRST



Now the pandemic is hopefully coming towards an end, there's a need for the support and expertise which full-service clubs deliver



The mid-market is a hidden giant says Minton

PHOTO: FITNESS FIRST

David Minton

The Leisure Database Company

The mid-market is a hidden giant. Around 70 per cent of all fitness sites in the UK fit my loose definition of mid-market. That's around 5,000 sites across all sectors. We can define mid-market based on data collected from all 7,000+ fitness sites in our national audit, *State of the UK Fitness Industry Report*, which will be published this quarter. Some of the key metrics are monthly membership price, gym equipment numbers and other facilities on offer.

In 2012, the low-cost sector was defined as charging below £20 per month. By 2018 just over half of low-cost operators were charging, on average, more than £20 per month, so a higher ceiling of £25 was created. Low-cost brands constantly test the market and often use a cheaper hook to attract members. Brands then upsell upgraded options, added value items, tempting membership options, often at a bargain busting



extra £5 per month. When added together this can push the basic over £30 per month or more. These members, if not the site or the brand, are starting to move onto a mid-market package. At the other end of the spectrum, there are far fewer premium clubs, yet special offers can hook members in at around £70 per month before extras.

The mid-market also has a near-monopoly on families who can't

“
The so-called death or squeeze of the mid-market is over-exaggerated and we have the figures to prove it

afford premium prices and the all-important swimming lessons, the second largest income generator after fitness. The mid-market also has a more sensitive approach to the older market, which is the largest demographic. Many sites have a more comfortable social option which encourages visits and loyalty. The so-called death or squeeze of the mid-market is over-exaggerated and we have the figures to prove it. ●

Eleonora Villari

Retrofit London

At between £129 and £169 a month we would not be seen as a mid-market offering in much of the UK, but in our South Kensington location, we are definitely mid-market as we sit alongside low-cost gyms as well as boutiques charging as much as £850 a month.

We set out to target the mid-market in this area, aiming our offering at a portion of customers who were not being served. Our goal was to bridge the gap and provide a luxury offering at an affordable price, offering personalised packages, a flexible monthly contract, group exercise, top-end equipment, personal training, highly-trained staff on-site at all

times, small classes and more space and luxury than the budget gyms.

We also offer a community, for example, we give our members free coffee to encourage them to stay for a chat. Pre-COVID people were in too much of a rush for this, but as we build back, there's a desire for human connection and it's become a popular service.

Retrofit London worked out what was needed to make a mid-market club successful in our location, but each one will be different and every location will have its own niche of what it can offer which isn't being served by other clubs in the area.



It's very important to analyse the local market, understand the gap and not compromise on quality



PHOTO ELEONORA VILLARI/RETROFIT LONDON

It's very important to analyse the local market, understand the gap and not compromise on quality. Also, listen to feedback and be flexible to customer needs, so they feel part of the decision making.



Swimming pools are often a mark of a mid-market club

Join W3Fit in 2022

Where Business Meets Wellness



Premier hosted buyer event connecting owners and operators from Europe's top health, fitness, and leisure clubs and hotels with executives from global supplier companies innovating the fitness industry through pre-scheduled one-on-one meetings, education, and networking.



“We are looking forward to meeting with suppliers face to face again so the news of We Work Well launching W3Fit for our industry is fantastic. We look forward to being part of the inaugural event.

Kevin Yates, CEO, TRIB3

It is great to hear about the launch of W3Fit, where industry leaders can meet, network and form everlasting friendships. We look forward to joining what surely will be a must attend event in our calendar.



Dave Wright, Creator & CEO, MYZONE

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Vaccines

'more effective in people who exercise'

Physically active people are 50 per cent more likely to develop higher levels of antibodies after receiving a vaccine, when compared to those who are physically inactive, according to new research

The finding comes from a study by Glasgow Caledonian University, which suggests that getting people to exercise can significantly increase the effectiveness of vaccination campaigns.

The study also found that 30 minutes of activity, five days a week, cuts the risk of falling ill and dying of infectious diseases by 37 per cent.

According to Professor Sebastien Chastin, one of the study's authors, the findings could have important implications for future pandemic responses.

Writing for the World Economic Forum, Chastin said: "We already know that physical activity is one of the most effective ways to prevent chronic diseases, along with following a healthy diet and not smoking. A previous study from 2008 already found that physical inactivity is responsible for more than five million premature deaths every year.

The evidence

For the Glasgow Caledonian study, Chastin and his team gathered and reviewed all available evidence relating to the effect of physical activity on the risk of falling ill and dying from infectious diseases such as pneumonia – a frequent cause of death from COVID-19 – on the functioning of the immune system and on the outcome of vaccination.

"We found reliable evidence that regular physical activity strengthens the human immune system," Chastin says.

"Across 35 independent randomised controlled trials – the gold standard for scientific evidence – regular physical activity resulted in elevated levels of the antibody immunoglobulin IgA.

"This antibody coats the mucous membranes in our lungs and other parts of our body where viruses and bacteria can enter.

"Regular physical activity also increases the number of CD4+ T cells, which are responsible for alerting the immune system to an attack and regulating its response.

"Finally, in the randomised controlled trials we studied, vaccines appear more effective if they are administered after a programme of physical activity. A person who is active is 50 per cent more likely to have a higher antibody count after the vaccine than somebody who is not active."

Chastin concludes: "Our systematic review of the evidence shows that regular physical activity strengthens the human immune system, reduces the risk of falling ill and dying from infectious disease, and significantly increases the effectiveness of vaccination campaigns. This has important implications for pandemic responses." More: www.hcmmag.com/effective

Exercise increases the number of CD4+ T cells, which regulate the immune response



Driving active communities

The new UK Leisure Framework has been set up to deliver £2bn of developments, as Paul Cluett, MD of Alliance Leisure explains

Since its launch in 2012, the UK Leisure Framework, owned and managed by Denbighshire Leisure and driven by Alliance Leisure as the lead development contractor, has been providing public sector leisure providers with an end-to-end leisure development solution that's transforming communities up and down the country.

As the Framework begins its third renewal, it's the perfect time to look back at the achievements to date and explore ambitions moving forwards.

The story so far

There are many established frameworks, but the UK Leisure Framework is unique for two reasons.

Firstly, it's the only one in the country to be entirely focused on leisure. This means all suppliers working through it are appointed based on their leisure experience and credentials. This creates huge opportunities to apply best practice learnings borne out of years of experience and practical application.

Secondly, the Framework isn't just focused on delivering bricks and mortar facilities; it adopts a full-service approach, supporting all elements that contribute to a successful, sustainable development, including design, business planning, funding, construction and marketing.

These factors help facilitate the development of active environments that reflect the specific needs of each local community. They also help ensure a



Paul Cluett

"The UK Leisure Framework is helping local authorities leverage their sports and physical activity provision to meet the government's levelling up ambitions"

sustainable future for these developments, both in terms of their financial viability and the provision of facilities and services that make a long-term contribution to the happiness, health and prosperity of the population they serve.

Impacting local outcomes

Since 2012, when Alliance Leisure was appointed lead development contractor, the UK Leisure Framework has delivered 58 projects with a total investment value of around £74m. Open to all UK local authorities and many other public sector bodies, projects completed under the framework have ranged from a £200,000 single community 3G pitch to enable year-round play, to the multi-million-pound transformation of entire leisure stock portfolios. The new UK Leisure Framework has a total investment value of £2bn and a project pipeline value of £250m.

The Framework is helping local authorities leverage their sports and physical activity provision to

meet the government's levelling up ambitions. We know we have an ageing leisure stock in the UK, which has serious repercussions for swimming pools in particular. Indeed, in its report *A Decade of Decline: The Future of Swimming Pools in England*, Swim England warned that almost 2,000 swimming pool locations could be lost by the end of the decade unless these ageing facilities are refurbished or replaced. The coronavirus pandemic has only exacerbated this issue.

The leisure-focused Framework is tackling the UK's ageing facilities



By simplifying the procurement process for leisure development projects, maximising efficiencies at every level of the supply chain and turning projects around quickly, the Framework gives local authorities an efficient and effective means of procuring and delivering sports and active leisure projects from concept to completion. In so doing, they increase opportunities for physical activity, shape active environments and create attractive places that provide a sense of civic pride.

Mitigating investment risk

Brexit, the pandemic and current global events are making life increasingly challenging and in times like these, some local authorities may be reluctant to invest in a non-statutory service such as leisure. But if these challenges have shown us anything, it's the importance of physical activity to the nation's mental health and physical wellbeing.

From play park refurbishments to brand new leisure centres, projects completed under the UK Leisure Framework are designed to deliver real community value, helping to break down barriers to inclusion and engagement, tackling health inequalities and bringing economic, health and social benefits to local communities.

By mitigating the risk of investment, the Framework has become a proven and trusted vehicle to achieving

THE FRAMEWORK IN NUMBERS

UK Leisure Framework, owned by Denbighshire Leisure
Lead development contractor, Alliance Leisure

■ Current new build developments:	4
■ Developments delivered:	58
■ Value of completed projects:	£75m
■ Value of committed projects:	£250m

these ambitions, even during tough times. It allows public sector providers to refurbish, redevelop and renew their tired leisure stock to prevent them from becoming a drain on resources. Instead, local authorities can work with leisure development experts to rethink their offering, what their communities really need and develop more creative solutions that encourage more people to be active. ●

For information on the UK Leisure Framework and to view a full list of appointed suppliers, visit: www.leisureframework.co.uk

Staff could be given an extended family membership to grow loyalty

“

The leisure industry is competing with the entire service industry, at a time when other sectors are increasing salaries



HUMAN COST

A recent CIMSPA Employer Partner report found between 85 and 100 per cent of employers are experiencing staff shortages in the UK, while salaries went down between December 2020 and 2021. Is our workforce experiencing an employment crisis? Sarah Lloyd investigates

There's no doubt the sector's 200,000-strong workforce* is doing vital work for the health of the nation. But knocked by Brexit, lockdowns and Omicron, many employees have left the industry. CIMSPA suggests 86 per cent of operators have been forced

to shut or partially-shut facilities and suspend services due to staff shortages, creating a cycle of poor staff retention and service for customers.

Abhi Lakhina, MD of Love Recruitment, says the fitness industry is not alone in competing for skilled workers. "Every year, leisure, hospitality and retail lose a certain number of transient staff – this will always be the case. However, we're now experiencing the perfect storm – COVID, Brexit and Visa and migration issues mean the natural churn of staff has accelerated, with fewer people available to fill the gaps.

"This is troubling for the leisure industry because it's competing with the entire service industry, including retail and big hospitality brands, at a time when these sectors are increasing salaries."

Community Leisure UK (CLUK) members are reporting staff shortages across the board, from entry-level roles to senior management,

which means, above and beyond salaries, we must ask what else is going wrong in leisure?

Trafford Leisure, a Community Interest Company managing eight leisure facilities on behalf of Trafford Council, is currently operating at a staff shortage of 35 per cent – a figure not unusual among Community Leisure members, who report having to recruit between 20 and 33 per cent of their usual workforce each year.

CEO Jo Cherrett says: "Digital advancements brought about by the pandemic have fast-tracked people's approach to where they work, how they work and what their employment expectations are. People are re-evaluating what's important, with the key takeaway being that flexible working is here to stay.

"On a positive note, if employers embrace a flexible workforce there's no reason why they can't have someone working for them from anywhere in the world, which gives us more opportunity to find innovative people for the sector. But the challenge is that our senior managers/support staff are largely working in a hybrid model, whereas our operational/front of house staff are not. There's a real risk of creating a divided culture, where one part of the



- ▶ workforce has complete flexibility, while those who are predominately less well paid have none.”

Cherrett believes an agile workforce is the way forward. “This could mean operational staff have at least two types of qualification and can, for example, instruct in the gym or take swimming lessons. This would allow us to run leisure centres more efficiently, with no clear divide between operations and support staff, and so pay a smaller team a lot more. For example, with a hybrid model, a third-year marketing student who works as a lifeguard two nights a week could also work one day a week in the marketing department.”

Aaron McCulloch, MD of Your Personal Training agrees: “There needs to be wholesale change from the top down in terms of roles and job descriptions; employers need to be clear and upfront about expectations. For example, a fitness instructor’s role usually involves a bit of everything, including front

of house, checking pool temperatures, lifeguarding, cafe duties and cleaning. There’s a massive disconnect between qualifications, job description and the reality of the role. Far too often staff end up feeling like a glorified cleaner who’s undervalued and underpaid.

“Standalone roles don’t exist, so repurposing qualifications will be central to the development of careers in the sector and long-term staff retention. We should be looking at broader roles, such as wellbeing manager or gym floor operation manager. People want flexibility, and senior leaders must think creatively about how they can accommodate this.”

Valuable assets

In the last 10 months alone, YPT has seen almost 300 people from within the sector, leaving employment to become a self-employed PT, reporting low pay, feeling undervalued and a lack of flexibility within their reasons.

Low-paid PTs are seeing self-employment as a better option

“

People want flexibility – we should be looking at broader roles, such as wellbeing manager or gym floor operation manager



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/GRITSA

Zero-hour contracts
do not create a
cohesive workforce

McCulloch says: "Most operators study the member journey, but not what motivates staff. I find it unbelievable that some still don't offer staff free membership – they should be your number one advocates and if you're not upskilling them, you're undervaluing them – only through investment in training will you reach a return of high performance.

"Our PTs earn some of the highest wages in the industry, at an average of £37,575pa against an industry average of £26,280pa and they stay in jobs for 28.6 months against an average of less than a year. This is partly because they get ongoing training and have autonomy.

Lakhina adds: "PTs are the backbone of the sector, but very little is known about what they want from the industry. Our survey found 46.3 per cent have a career goal of running their own PT business or gym, while 38.4 per cent want to become a senior manager. This demonstrates a desire to stay in the sector and is further supported by our findings that the top three things a PT looks for in an employer are progression of opportunities, team environment and financial success."

Tara Dillon, CIMSPA CEO thinks the problem is cyclical. "We need to make our sector more attractive to the communities we serve and potential employees. Around 100,000 students will graduate with a Sport Science degree or similar this summer. Where do they vanish to? Members of Generation Z think differently about who they choose to work for, they look at the ethics of a

company," she says. "Zero-hour contracts and self-employment might save a facility money initially, but in the longer term it doesn't make an individual feel valued or create a cohesive workforce."

It's something Cherrett is passionate about, but she says an honest conversation needs to be had around the living wage. "We know staff who have come to us from a supermarket prefer our environment, the perks and the values of our brand, and that the work is less boring, with greater responsibility. But I also know I only have a couple of years before they need to be earning more. Fifteen years ago, being a lifeguard paid significantly more than stacking shelves – that's no longer the case.

"Our ability to connect with staff and how we treat them is what's going to help us to come out of this perfect storm. For example, we give our staff free membership, which after a year's employment is extended to two additional family memberships and after two years, that becomes three etc.

"As with our customer packages, we don't define what a family is. This inclusive approach adds meaningful impact to our employee's immediate community and they hopefully become the champions for our brand.

"We've partnered with Simply Health to help staff with dentistry, GPs, fast-tracking consultant appointments and free counselling. We also have 'mental health first aiders' to help develop a resilient workforce. Some staff, especially those who worked throughout the pandemic and those covering extra

- ▶ shifts due to staff shortages, are feeling burned out. How can we promote positive wellbeing without looking at our staff first? I've never had to consider the resilience of my staff as much as I do now."

Train to retain

Dillon believes training is key to a resilient workforce and says that, whilst CIMSPA's recent findings don't initially make positive reading, our sector is further down the line than others in resolving workforce issues. "Not prioritising training is a false economy. It's easier to train existing staff than take on new employees, so investigating new funding sources could be the answer if budgets are tight."

Lakhina agrees: "It's crazy to think a PT can qualify in four to six weeks and charge/earn the same as a PT with 10 years' experience. The point at which they qualify should not be the end of their training, it should be the start – and employers need to invest in their people from the get-go."

The ReTrain to Retain scheme is a £5m job retention and support package, funded by Sport England through the National Lottery and delivered by CIMSPA alongside UK Coaching and EMD UK.



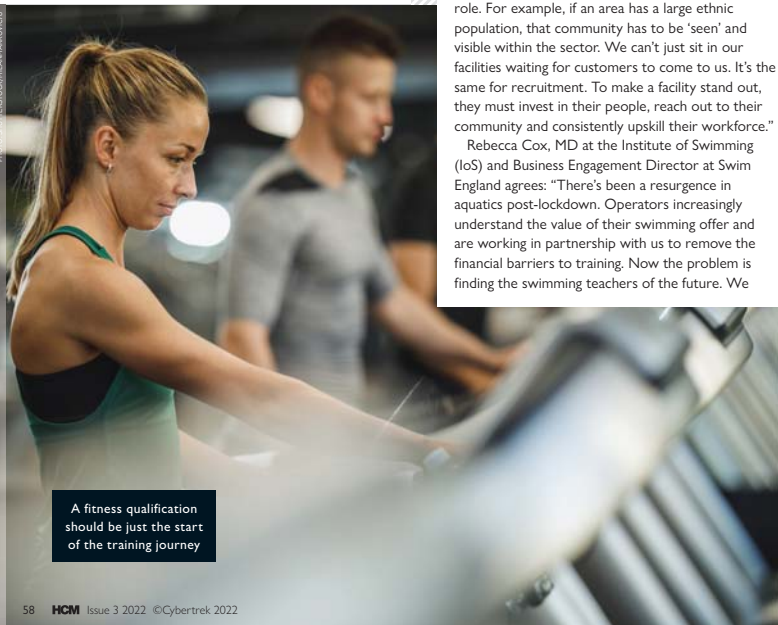
15 years ago, being a lifeguard paid significantly more than stacking shelves – that's no longer the case

Dillon says: "It's already been successful in getting people back into the industry post-lockdown, by identifying where the need is and up-skilling staff to fill gaps. We need to tackle long-term staff shortages by creating sustainable, eco-system 'place-based' learning opportunities – a local approach to training that makes use of communities to engage more effectively with regional demographics.

"People need to 'see themselves' in any given role. For example, if an area has a large ethnic population, that community has to be 'seen' and visible within the sector. We can't just sit in our facilities waiting for customers to come to us. It's the same for recruitment. To make a facility stand out, they must invest in their people, reach out to their community and consistently upskill their workforce."

Rebecca Cox, MD at the Institute of Swimming (IoS) and Business Engagement Director at Swim England agrees: "There's been a resurgence in aquatics post-lockdown. Operators increasingly understand the value of their swimming offer and are working in partnership with us to remove the financial barriers to training. Now the problem is finding the swimming teachers of the future. We

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/ALAMY/JOE



A fitness qualification should be just the start of the training journey

Apprenticeships enable clubs to recruit and retain fresh new talent

need to look outwards, learn from other industries and engage with people beyond our own peripheral view; we can't just engage with people who love to swim. Our recruitment academy is a great example. It's given us the opportunity to talk to people who wouldn't even think it's a plausible career, dispelling myths such as 'you need to be an Olympic athlete'."

The IoS Teachers' Academy is part-funded by operators looking for staff, taking candidates through Swim England's Level 1 Swimming Assistant (teaching) and Level 2 Teaching Swimming qualifications.

Trainees get a year's membership to the IoS, which includes insurance and access to CPD. They work with potential employers to ensure they have the necessary experience for the role.

Cox continues: "We've had success finding new swimming teachers by actively engaging with the local demographic. It's so important the leisure sector is representative of the communities it serves and, while it's not where it needs to be yet, the trend is positive."

Similarly, CIMSPA's Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Leicester and Leicestershire is part of the Department of Education's Skills Accelerator programme – a 'trailblazer' project looking at the information barriers that exist between employers and education providers, with the vision of making skill training more responsive to employer's needs. Working with colleges, the Chamber of Commerce, local authorities and 150 employers in the area, they identified skill shortages, bringing in CIMSPA training partners to upskill and help resolve the issues.

Active Oldham (Oldham Community Leisure)

has had some success through the Government's Kick Start scheme, which provides funding for businesses that create jobs for 16- to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit. The funding covers 100 per cent of the National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week for up to six months. Simon Blair, Oldham Active's Head of Business says: "This scheme can introduce the young people in our community to a career in leisure, hopefully for the long term. We currently have nine young people working with us under this programme, and have already extended one person's employment. The others have completed their pool lifeguard training."

Dillon concludes: "Apprenticeships are a great opportunity for employers to recruit and retain talent. CIMSPA and ukactive must continue to lobby for funding as they remain one of the best routes into our industry as people can earn as they learn."

"Many people join our sector seeking a vocational and rewarding career, knowing it doesn't pay well. With appropriate and accessible training in place, opportunities for a long-term, fulfilling, well-paid career are there. Whilst deep problems remain within recruitment, consistent and determined action from the government and employers can and will deliver results." ●

* In a ukactive report Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA, says: 'There are around 7,000 gyms, pools and leisure facilities across the UK, employing more than 189,000 full-time staff, 60,000 self-employed or freelance staff, such as PTs.'

Game changing growth



The UK health club sector could grow to engage up to 35 per cent of the population, according to a Fitronics study, reports Marc Jones

In recent focus groups, health and fitness operators said they wanted to understand growth opportunities in the market.

As a result, Fitronics commissioned YouGov and Dr Melvyn Hillsdon to carry out a landmark study into non-members to better understand the growth potential of the sector.

A survey of over 2,000 adults was undertaken, designed as a representative sample of the UK population. Research questions focused on gaining insight into important areas, such as the potential for growth, audience size, and the proportion of active and inactive non-members.

Breaking down the sample, 55 per cent had never been a member of a health club, while 30 per cent were lapsed members and 14 per cent were current members.

In addition, 45 per cent were active at or above the recommended government level, 42 per cent were active, but at lower levels than recommended and 13 per cent were inactive.

Key findings

The findings revealed a substantial opportunity to increase membership in the UK fitness market by 10.9m members, taking market penetration from the current level of 14 per cent up to 35 per cent.

For some years, the industry has been focused on attracting the 85 per cent of the UK population who are not yet members of a health club, however, this new research suggests the greatest potential for growth

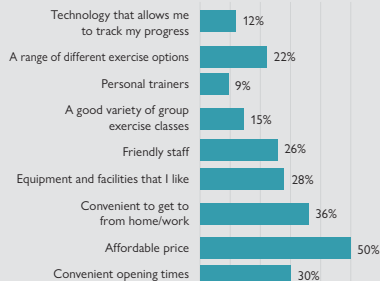
lies in targeting people who are already active but are not members of a gym, health club or leisure centre.

Priorities

Attracting active non-members requires persuading them away from their existing ways of being active and represents a new marketing challenge, especially if the activities they're engaged with are free.

Within the target group of active non-members, researchers found those who've never been a member would be harder to reach than lapsed members, as those who've never joined see fewer reasons to do so.

Factors more likely to make people join a gym, health club or leisure centre





The greatest potential for growth lies in targeting people who are already active but are not members of a health club

Motivation

Across the entire sample, the main factors that people said would increase the probability of them joining a club were cost and access. However, friendly staff, a range of exercise offerings and peoples' preferred equipment were also ranked as important.

Across the active non-member sample, people were nine times more likely to say membership was important to them if they thought there would be friendly staff, whereas affordability only doubled the likelihood of them saying membership was important.

Finding a balance

With the growing movement within the industry to reach and nurture inactive non-members, there is – of course – a balance to be struck between delivering social and community value and commercial gains and deliverables.

There is, therefore, an opportunity to focus on, to onboard and to attract active non-members, alongside people in the harder-to-reach non-active market.

● More: www.fitronics.com

Fitronics worked with YouGov and Dr Melvyn Hillsdon to understand non-members

GET THE REPORT

- You'll be able to download the full Fitronics report from April 2022.
- Part two of this research will explore attitudes, values and behaviours in more depth when it's published later this year.
- Register your interest using the QR code







A pause for thought

To celebrate the publication of the 300th edition of *HCM*, we've invited industry experts to give their insights on the health and fitness sector: why they joined, the most exciting development to date and what they think we'll be reporting on in the next 300 issues...

David Minton

Founder
The Leisure Database Company

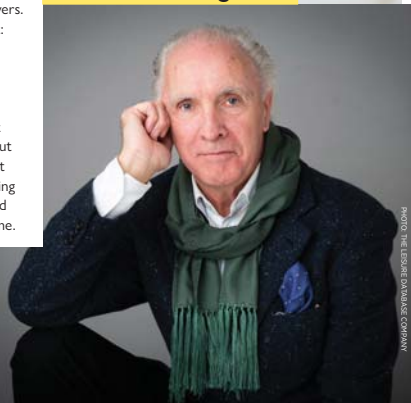
I came into the industry by accident, but with my sociology background, I found it fascinating and thrilling in equal measure that we knew so little 40 years ago about what motivated people to move.

Today I'm sure data and technology are the enablers, though on their own they will not provide the answers.

The industry needs to go where it's needed most: local communities and the wider health sector, offering a range of support it currently doesn't provide. It means reskilling and retraining. It means re-imagining the product to grow the market.

It's a bit of a jump from the current 15.6 per cent market penetration, but what I'm most excited about is the potential for the sector to touch 100 per cent of the population, from cradle to the grave. Improving the health and fitness levels of the population should be a legacy of the first global pandemic in our lifetime.

*I'm most excited
about the potential
for the sector to touch
100 per cent of the
population, from the
cradle to the grave*



Access to value fitness models has levelled the playing field for members

PHOTO: RISE GYM/MIKA STEELE

Humphrey Cobbold

CEO
Pure Gym

Working in an arena where the products and services help customers to live a better and healthier life is a pretty fundamental motivator for me. As I'm in the fortunate position of not having to work for narrow or immediate financial reasons, there has to be a sense of purpose in what I'm contributing to if I'm going to get out of bed every morning!

I may be biased, but I do think the emergence of the value fitness model has been the industry's biggest event in recent history. It's expanded access for tens of millions of people to affordable, flexible fitness and that's a great long-run trend for our industry and society as a whole.

The industry must double down on the integration of facility-based

fitness with digital/online/screen/meta-based fitness and flexibility for people to exercise when and where they want to.

We mustn't fall into the trap that retailers did for too long of hoping that e-commerce would either be small or go away. We need to embrace that future.

I continue to be excited by the evidence I see every day of us helping people to live better lives. That's the core of the sense of purpose I have and it continues to motivate me for the future.



PHOTO: PURE GYM/ANNA PROUDMAN

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The emergence of the value fitness model has been the biggest event in the recent history of the industry

Facility operators need to embrace digital offers



PHOTO: PURE GYM/JAMES MCCORMIE

Emma Barry**Industry thought leader and author of *Building a Badass Boutique***

I'm excited about many things in the sector. That what we do is now valued as a prize. The rise of scientific fitness. The amalgamation of movement genre, the cohesion of community vibe, the possibility of technological enablement to both scale concepts regardless of location and enhance the experience. And that we're stepping into the multiverse where the possibilities become limitless.

Health and fitness are fundamental to happiness, so it's great to be a part of something inherently good. I'm pleased I'm not currently having a midlife crisis and having to rethink my vocation because I've sold my soul to an evil "profits first" corporate structure.

Championing communities has been one of our biggest achievements. Whether it be a sports team, a hiking adventure, a group exercise class or a bootcamp in the park, we're a people-first industry: enjoying the journey, holding each other accountable, showing up, and having a lot of fun along the way. We don't do

well when we stop moving and we don't do well when we're alone.

Going forward, we need to team up with forces greater than us and manage ourselves alongside the fundamental ecosystem of life: health, food, fashion, tech, insurance, work, habit-forming. We need to close the loop on self-managing wellness. With wearables gifting us real-time diagnostics and our exercise of choice becoming interactive, we're now well placed to actually deliver on the worn-out adage of #livingmybestlife.

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**We need to
close the
loop on
self-managing
wellness**



PHOTO: ZAHARA ROBERTSON

It's great to be part of something inherently good, says Emma Barry

Phillip Mills

**Executive director
Les Mills International**

When my dad, Les Mills Snr, opened our first gym in New Zealand 54 years ago, he said the job of the fitness industry is to help people fall in love with fitness and that's a mission I'm still very driven by today. So many people in our industry inspire me and it's really powerful to witness the passion and commitment they bring to their roles.

I may be slightly biased, but I think the birth of group fitness, at the start of the 80s, was a major landmark for the sector. It brought women into the gym for the first time and dramatically increased peoples' enjoyment of exercise.

We've all lost members over the past two years and need to grow numbers back as quickly as possible, which means doing new things to create excitement. During the depths of the global financial crisis, there were still people lining up outside Apple stores to buy the latest iPhone. That's the

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The job of the fitness industry is to help people fall in love with fitness

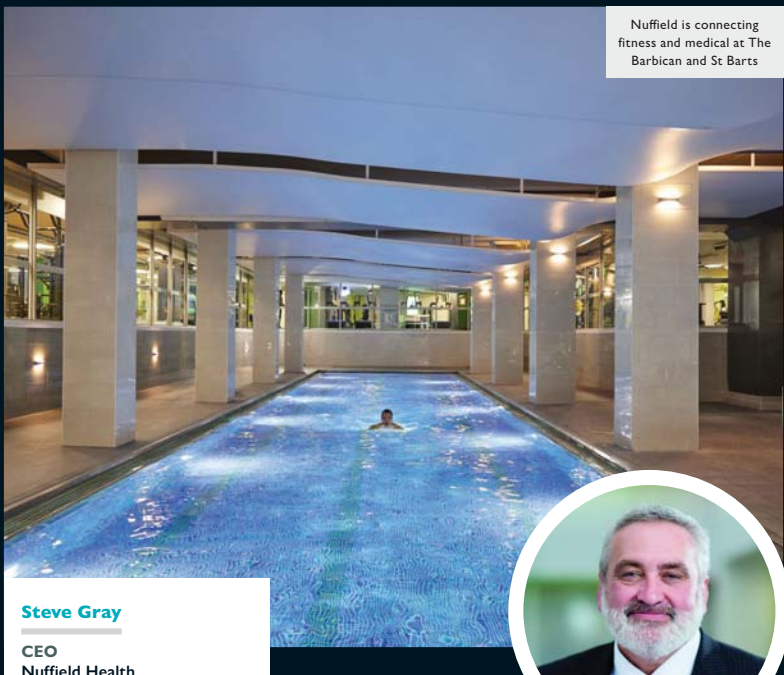
level we have to aim for – new equipment, exciting new class concepts, boutiques inside our clubs, chic and dynamic décor – offers compelling enough to motivate people, whatever's going on in the world.

Our industry has a huge role to play in creating a fitter planet in terms of both people and the environment. We're at a crucial juncture in the battle against climate change and there's so much we can do to support this, including minimising our footprint, promoting active transport and eating regeneratively grown food. Every individual who becomes holistically healthier is helping. We also need to advocate and help educate our members in how to achieve this.



The industry must
work to support people
and planet, says Mills

Nuffield is connecting fitness and medical at The Barbican and St Barts



Steve Gray

CEO
Nuffield Health

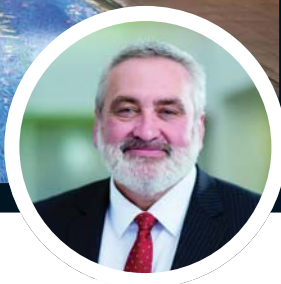
wanted to work in a sector that can have a meaningful and positive impact on the health of the nation.

Not simply focusing on how we help people improve their health and wellbeing, but also on the wider impact we can have on society by keeping people healthy and well, enabling them to work, support their families and communities.

Before the pandemic, there were more than 10 million UK gym goers: around 15 per cent of our population. Then the sector faced its biggest ever challenge, yet the recovery since reopening has been fantastic – we're almost at pre-pandemic levels outside of city centres.

I think we've learned, especially from the pandemic, that health and fitness are part of the same conversation. It's time the two industries came closer together to work hand-in-hand for the benefit of the nation. Similarly, it's important we think about whole-person wellness – physical and mental health – and the benefits we can bring to both.

Health has never been in the public conscience as much as it is today. It's a huge opportunity to engage the public and look at evolving the role of fitness professionals to help ease the pressure on the NHS, for example, by upskilling the sector to deliver low-level medical interventions.



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It's important we think about whole-person wellness – physical and mental health

“

Once considered somewhat tedious and unappealing, fitness is now cool and desirable

Sophie Lawler**CEO****Total Fitness**

I started my fitness career more than 20 years ago, qualifying as a fitness coach so I no longer had to work in a nightclub to pay my way through my masters degree. I can't say I ever intended on a career in our sector, but there's something about it that you just can't beat. What could be a greater gift than helping people – clients and team members – to be better every day?

Over these years, I feel attitudes to fitness physical activity have changed significantly – once considered somewhat tedious and unappealing, it's now cool and desirable. Decades ago a gym membership had to be pushed, but fitness fundamentally sells itself now, which allows us to focus on the value proposition.

I'd love the sector to capitalise on this new reality by bringing more operators together, embracing the true breadth of it. There's such power and purpose in what we do, but there's a misconception about our scale and contribution because people tend to think about big health clubs alone.

Predictions are hard to make, but I'm excited to be in health and fitness and can't think of any better sector to serve.

Fitness is now seen as cool and desirable, not a chore, says Lawler

PHOTO: EUROPEACTIVE



David Stalker

President Europe Active

Our industry was blessed to have a generation of entrepreneurs, and a great market has been built on their shoulders

What I love about this sector is the constant hunger to grow that impact and contribution to individuals and society. For an industry that's been written off so many times in its short history, it has shown it can be a resilient and evolving part of creating healthier and happier communities for generations to come.

Our industry was blessed to have a generation of entrepreneurs who emerged around the same time, and a great market has been built on their shoulders. We should recognise and learn from the experience of those entrepreneurs, their failings too, and inspire the entrepreneurial spirit that is going to be needed to foster the innovation essential to driving growth in our sector.

I believe the pandemic has set the stage for the next generation of new business models, new products and new services. Our sector was firmly shut for much of the past two years, yet the recovery has shown how deeply appreciated it is by consumers. They were incentivised to try every type of substitute possible, yet still opted to return to their gyms and health clubs in their droves, despite some having unfounded concerns about safety.

We have to reward them and attract an even wider audience than before by raising the level of our products, our services and the experiences we provide inside and outside facilities – whether they're delivered independently or in collaboration with partners. The commitment to do this that I see from the most progressive organisations in our industry excites me enormously.

The post-pandemic recovery has shown how deeply clubs are valued

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK_MYSUALS





I like this industry because it's the most complex business on earth, incorporating science, politics, money, genetics, ethics and more – all mixed up

Muir Gray

**Director
The Optimal Ageing
Programme**

The industry has been shaped by three main things. Firstly, the initiative by Florence Nightingale to launch fitness training in 1860, in Oxford. Secondly, the publication of a report on the importance of activity by the

four Chief Medical Officers, in 2010. Thirdly, the report from the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, *Exercise the Miracle Cure*, in 2015.

Now the industry needs to reunite with the NHS to form a health and wellbeing industry.

The skills of physical activity professionals in motivating people is exciting for me. There are 15 million people with long-term conditions who will never reach a physiotherapy department and who could benefit from these skills and reduce the need for health and social care.

Fundamentally, I like this industry because it's the most complex business on earth, incorporating science, politics, money, genetics, ethics and a few more topics all mixed up – and in the public eye.

Florence Nightingale's fitness training in 1860 helped shape the industry

Jason Reynolds

Head of fitness Lanserhof at the Arts Club:

After a head injury during my teens, I used Pilates and personal training as part of my rehabilitation. Since then, I've always known this was the career for me.

I love how much impact I can have on other people's lives. Making my clients happy makes me happy. I also love seeing my staff members flourish and grow.

Parts of the industry felt stagnant between 2000-2020, innovation was limited and training was largely the same, but now industry professionals are beginning to use data to drive training prescription and modification. I also think virtual reality-based exercise, such as that performed on Icaros or Holofit has a huge future, especially for biofeedback and injury rehabilitation. Virtual reality training should continue to become a larger part of the industry. I also think more diagnostic services need to be included to allow for a better prescription of exercise. Focus should also shift towards events and workshops to improve client knowledge on aspects such as training techniques and nutrition.

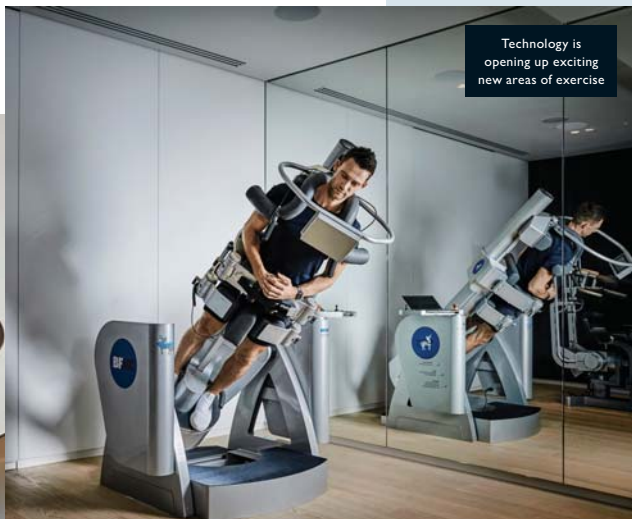


PHOTO: ANDY BARNES/PHOTOGRAPHY

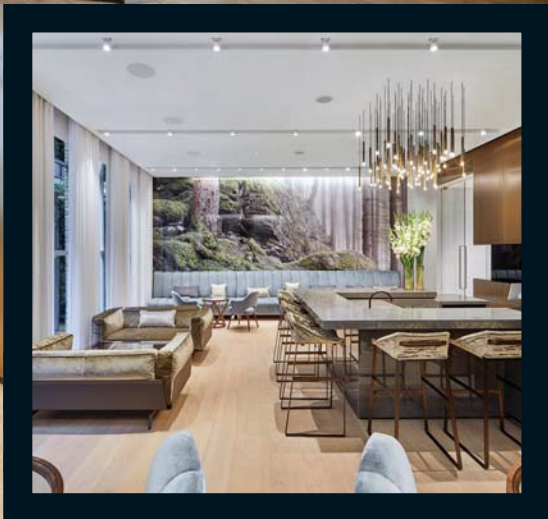
The industry is now using data more to drive training prescriptions



Virtual reality-based exercise has a huge future, especially for biofeedback and rehabilitation



Technology is opening up exciting new areas of exercise



Lanserhof at The Arts Club offers advanced medical and wellness services

PHOTO MARTIN NOBBEL

Neil Randall

CEO

Anytime Fitness UK

I love the virtuous circle the health and fitness sector creates.

The emotional reward and job satisfaction you get from seeing people make progress is hard to beat. It's been exciting to see the emergence of different training types and modalities, particularly functional training.

Going forward it's necessary for operators to provide truly omni-channel health experiences. If people love a brand, they should be able to access it any time and incorporate it into their daily lives.

The sector needs to get better at communicating the benefits we provide for the overall health of the nation. We need to be woven into the government's strategy for wellbeing, but first, we need to show why, demonstrating what expertise



We need to be woven into the government's strategy for wellbeing

we bring, the broad range of health benefits we can provide and why people should be incentivised to visit health clubs. We need to be more present in these conversations and be taken more seriously.

I'm excited for the development of the sector. Having come through a challenging time, we now have a clearer idea of where we're positioned and the role we can play.

With the digital transformation rapidly accelerated, it will be interesting to see how technology can further positively impact the health of the population.

The sector needs to get better at communicating all the benefits it can offer



Exercise modalities such as functional training have emerged

Digital offers will grow, but there is still a need for human connection

300th
ISSUE

Consumer demand for wellness products will reach way beyond a gym membership, and this is where the most opportunities lie for our industry

Glenn Earlam

Executive chair
David Lloyd Leisure

I think it was more my wife's ambition than mine to join the industry initially! When I left my previous job at Merlin Entertainments, I was trying to decide between joining a brewery group or David Lloyd Leisure. My wife was keener on the idea of me spending most of my time in health clubs rather than in pubs!

I've really enjoyed my seven years in the industry. I love how passionate everybody is about what we do and as challenging as it's been, it's been a particularly interesting place to be in the last two years.

The most exciting development has been running and cycling becoming cool: they've been my 'go-to' choice of exercise for more than 25 years, so I'm finally on trend.

There is so much more awareness of wellness as a concept now, particularly the importance of good nutrition, relaxation and sleep and their relationship to physical and mental health. Consumers' demand for wellness products will reach way beyond a gym membership, and this is where the most opportunities lie for our industry.



Physical location is also becoming less important. Consumers want to be able to access products and expertise whenever or wherever they chose. The digital space will continue to grow at pace, but at the same time, people are placing increased value on community. They want to connect with others, whether that's face-to-face, online, or a bit of both. So, as the industry develops its digital offering, we mustn't forget the importance of human connection.



I'd like to see a cut in VAT and for tax to be removed on exercise, so memberships can be made cheaper

PHOTO: THE GYM GROUP



John Treharne

**Founder director
The Gym Group**

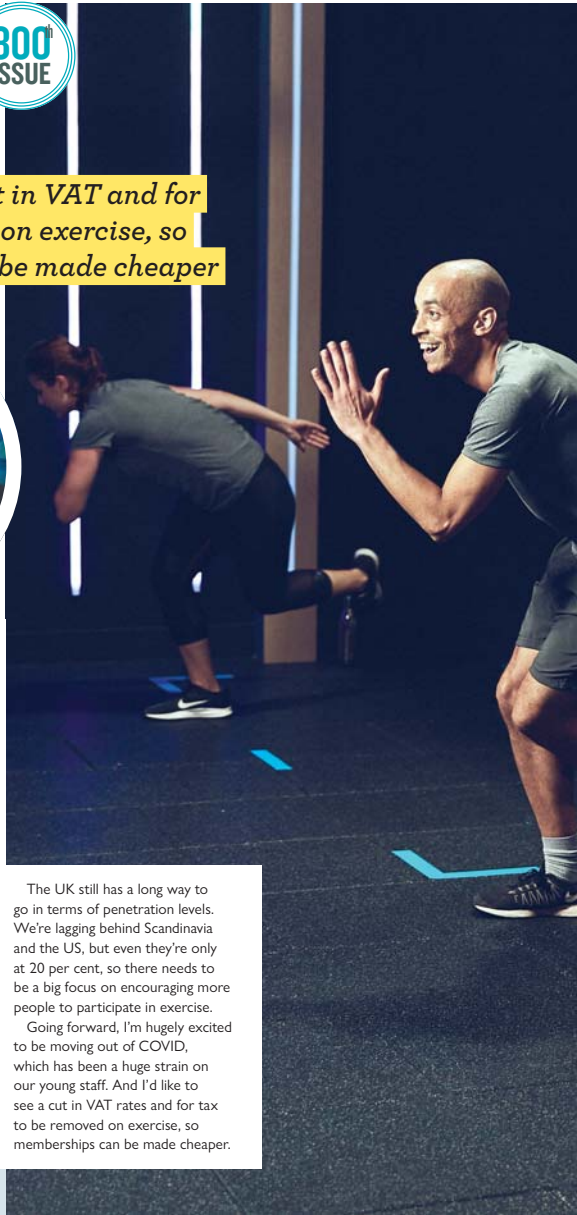
I joined the Coral Leisure Group in the late 80s, because of a mixture of passion and interest. I played squash for England and was British Racquetball champion so had a significant interest in fitness and was also a trained accountant.

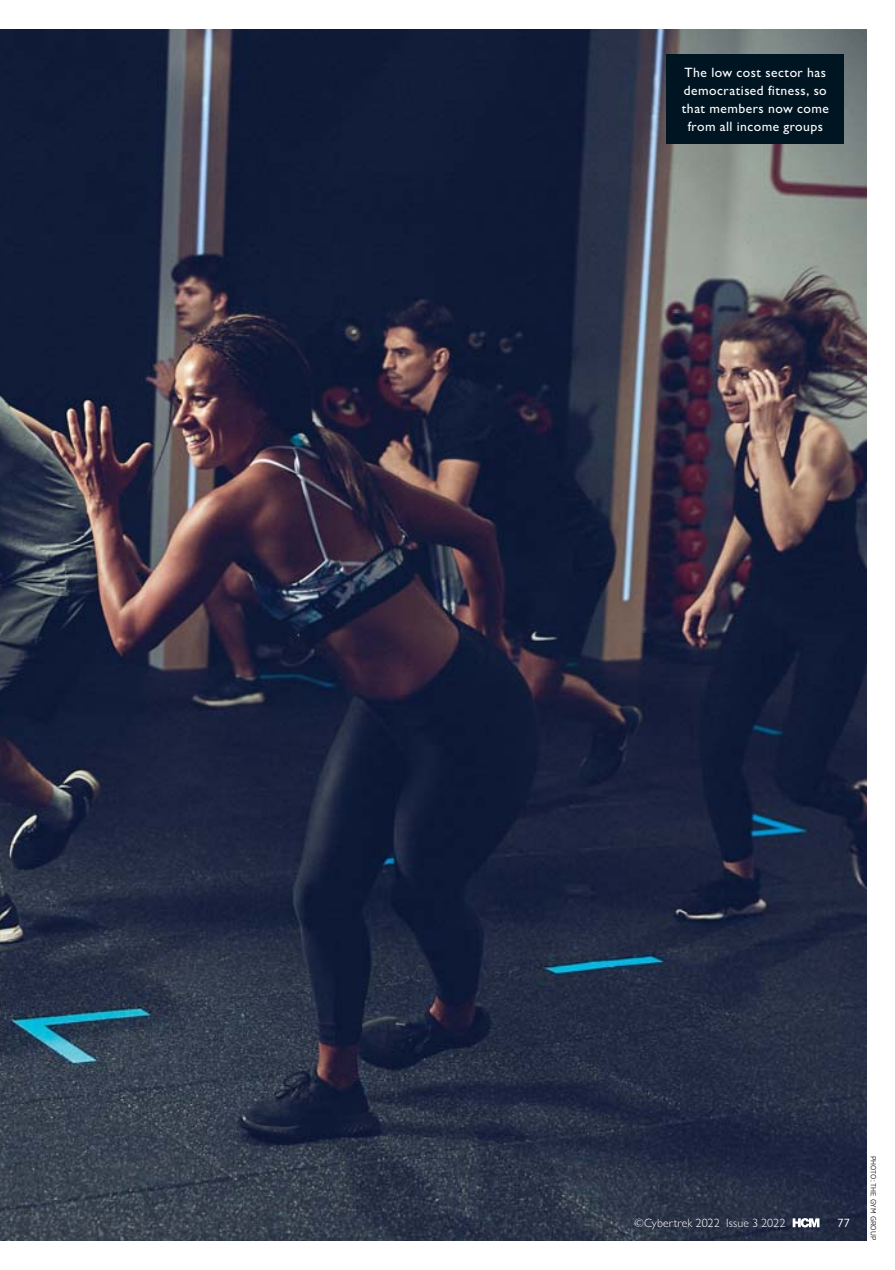
Back then health clubs were broadly speaking for the middle classes – even local authority provision was relatively expensive – so one of the most exciting things to happen in the industry is the way the low-cost sector has democratised fitness. Now someone on benefits can be working out next to a multi-millionaire.

Sustainability now needs to be a huge focus across the sector: The Gym Group aims to be carbon neutral in five to 10 years.

The UK still has a long way to go in terms of penetration levels. We're lagging behind Scandinavia and the US, but even they're only at 20 per cent, so there needs to be a big focus on encouraging more people to participate in exercise.

Going forward, I'm hugely excited to be moving out of COVID, which has been a huge strain on our young staff. And I'd like to see a cut in VAT rates and for tax to be removed on exercise, so memberships can be made cheaper.



A group of people are running on a treadmill in a gym. The woman in the foreground is wearing a black and white sports bra and black leggings, and she is smiling. Other people are visible in the background, also running. The gym has a dark floor with blue lines and a rack of red dumbbells in the background.

The low cost sector has democratised fitness, so that members now come from all income groups



TRIB3 is heading into the Metaverse following a deal with The Sandbox

Kevin Yates

CEO TRIB3

The big tech revolution has really helped our sector. It's helped break down barriers and given people knowledge and confidence to try new workouts and new styles of fitness.

I also think the boutique fitness sector has been amazing at shaking the dust off tired forms for fitness operation and the fitness landscape.

Web 3.0 and the Metaverse is where we're going! This is an exciting progression and provides a huge opportunity to engage and enthuse a new audience. I'm really excited about the growth potential. As an industry, we're projected to grow by almost 10 per cent in the next five years.

PHOTO: TRIB3



*As an industry,
we're projected
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10 per cent
in the next
five years*

We're also excited about new people coming into our sector with fresh ideas and new ambitions.

Our franchise pipeline is brimming right now and it's a great mix of everyone from fitness veterans and pros through to business people and investors who are new to our market but have great vision. It's all to play for and we can't wait.

I've always had a love of health and fitness and I believe everyone has the right to access good quality experiences that not only improve their physical health but also their mental health. I love that I can make a genuine difference to people's lives through world-class fitness experiences. I love that the TRIB3 brand is impacting lives around the world – both from an exerciser's point of view, and also for franchise partners.



I'm very excited by the opportunity for our sector to directly address the ambitious challenge of the government's Better Health agenda

Mark Sesnan

**Executive director
GLL**

I wanted to join the sector because it's full of dynamic, enthusiastic people dedicated to doing the best for our communities, but also good at enjoying themselves!

One of the most positive things to happen is the outsourcing of public leisure centres in the UK to be operated by charitable social enterprises – businesses with a social purpose.

Going forward, we need to move away from just running gyms to

really grasping the nettle of healthy and active lifestyles for all, using all dimensions of our enthusiastic and talented workforces, as well as our great physical assets.

I'm very excited by the opportunity for our sector to directly address the ambitious challenge of the government's Better Health agenda, particularly focusing on growing our market by getting the traditionally inactive into meaningful activity.

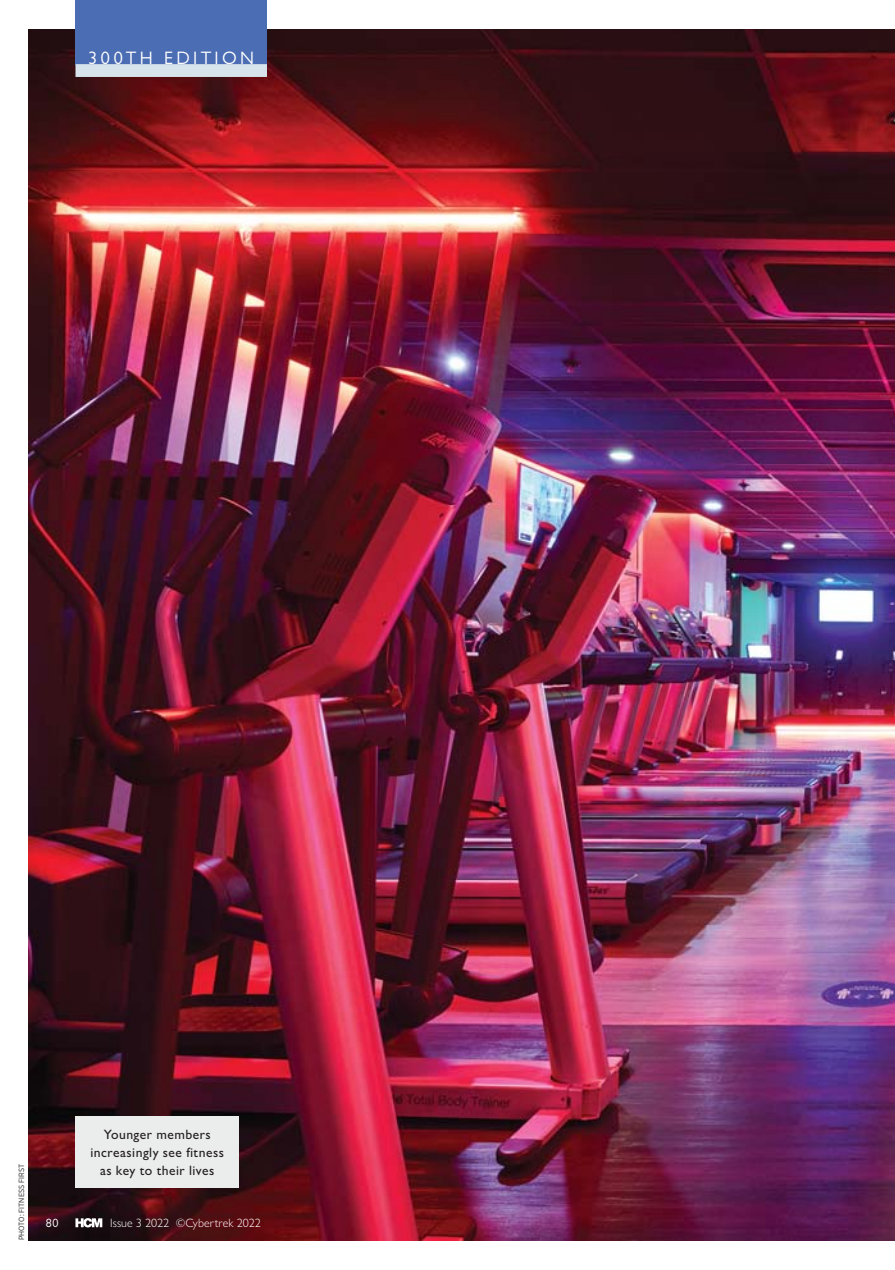


PHOTO: GLL



Healthy, active
lifestyles for all is
part of Sesnan's vision

PHOTO: GLL



Younger members increasingly see fitness as key to their lives

Lee Matthews**Managing director
Fitness First:**

Utilising our collective data could be the key to opening more doors with government and the health care sector

The evolution of the sector to offer greater choice has been very exciting over the last few decades. Prior to the emergence of the full service 'big box' gym chains, we typically saw male-dominated bodybuilding gyms and separate female-dominated locations for classes.

Since then we've seen multiple evolutions bring new options for members, whether that be CrossFit, low-cost operators, outdoor offerings, boutiques, and at-home offerings. Members now have a vast amount of choice, which can only grow the numbers of people taking part in regular exercise.

One opportunity, as a sector, is the accurate collection and utilisation of data, showing the positive impact our sector has. Utilising our collective data could be the key to opening more doors with government and the health care sector.

I'm really excited about the growth of the industry. We're seeing the younger end of our members now being more active than ever, with more of them regarding fitness as part of their life from their earlier years.

I spent my childhood and teenage years playing competitive sport at a high level, but when I realised my dream of becoming a professional wasn't going to materialise, the closest thing to my natural passion felt like a career in the fitness industry.

Doing something I'm passionate about, which makes an enormous difference to people's lives, is the main thing I love about the job.

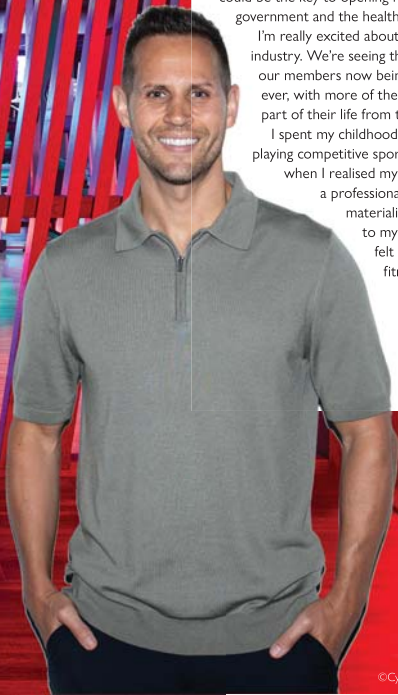


PHOTO: JIAN HONWARTH



Andy King

CEO

Link4Life:

wanted to be a doctor but my O Level art and 3 CSEs didn't cut it for medical school. After being a pro drummer for nine years, I opted for a sport and leisure degree as a mature student. I still love the idea of helping people have a healthier life and now I know more about a GPs' actual work, my job is probably closer to my original naïve ambitions.

I'm so excited about the recent Prehab4Cancer report (www.hcmmag.com/Prehab4Cancer) which evidences the amazing outcomes that can be achieved by getting people more active

Pre- and post-op exercise can improve outcomes for cancer patients



Prehab4Cancer is the most potentially game-changing thing I've seen in all my years in the sector

before and after cancer surgery and treatment, it's the most potentially game-changing thing I've seen in all my years in the sector.

The public sector needs to agree a purpose that binds us all together and sees us contribute effectively to the health of the nation. We need to get over what type of provider we are – it's up to councils to choose what fits their often political desires – and set up as the national wellness service. The appetite for being healthier, for being more resilient and resistant to disease and the realisation of the benefits of physical activity for mental health and wellbeing have never been more widely known or appreciated. I'm excited to see how we adapt our proposition to be relevant to the 80 per cent of the population we struggle to attract, and particularly support those who need our help the most. Tech will play a huge role in this in any number of ways.

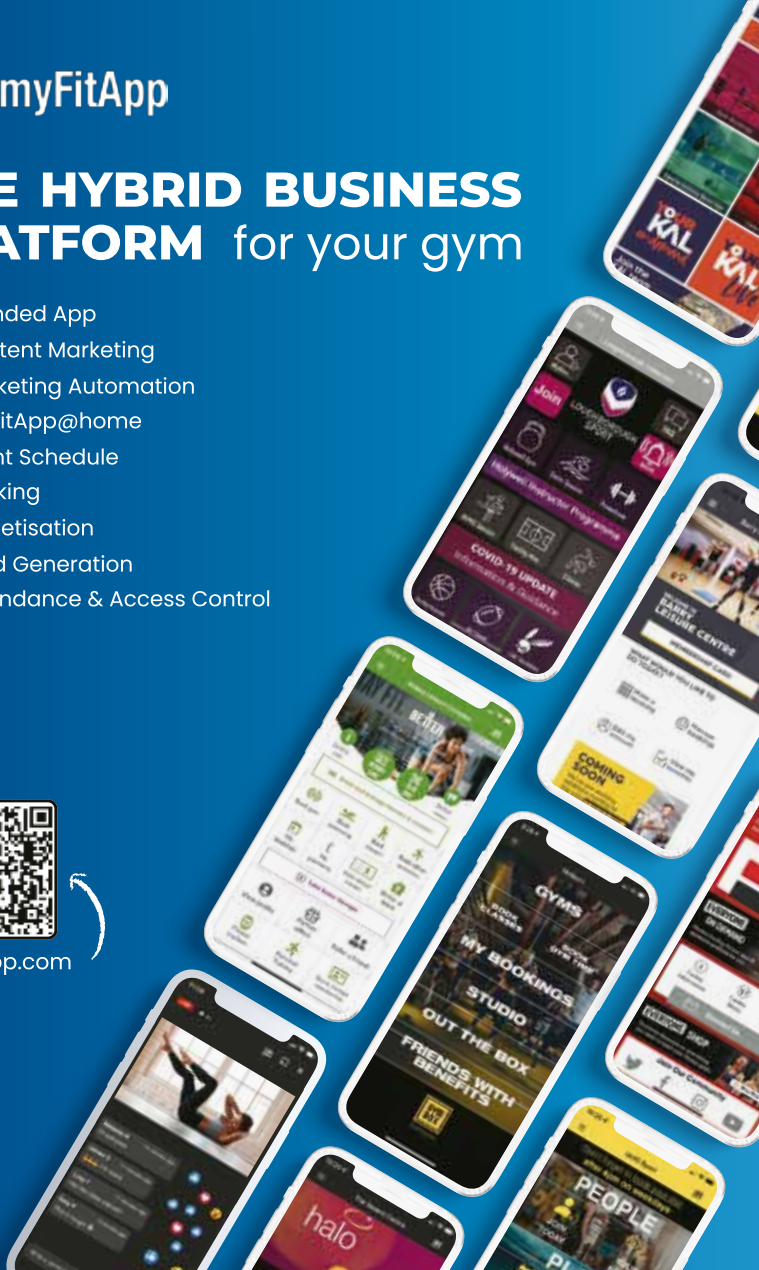


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There's still much to be done in regards to individualising the customer experience

Rasmus Ingerslev

CEO

Wexer and industry entrepreneur

I'm super passionate about exercise and working with something you're passionate about – with people who share the same passion – is an absolute gift.

My mission in life, regarding my work, is to help as many people as possible to live healthier, happier lives through exercise and proper nutrition. That's meaningful to me.

The most positive thing to happen in the industry is its diversification, which has been the key driver for consumer engagement and industry growth. Never have we seen so many different types of exercise offered in so many different types of studio/

club settings – as well as online – with a range of prices that allows close to anybody to participate.

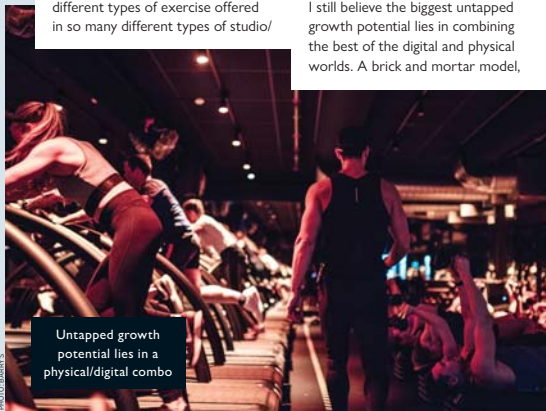
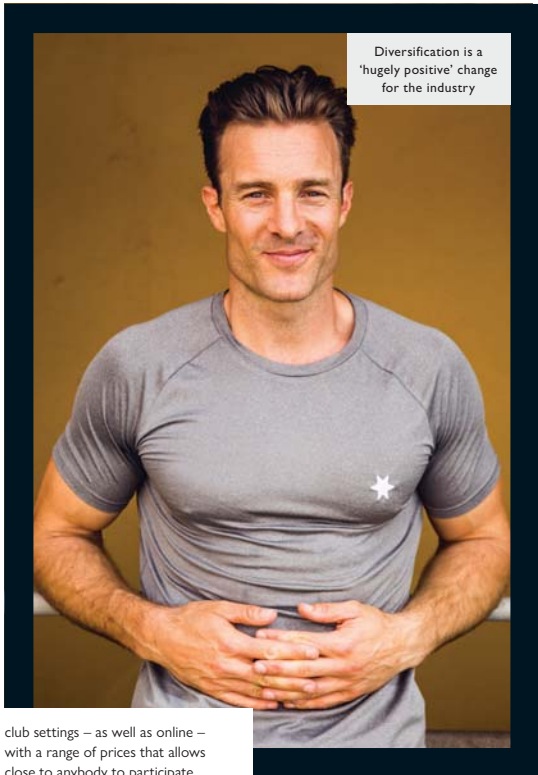
I've preached this for years, but I still believe the biggest untapped growth potential lies in combining the best of the digital and physical worlds. A brick and mortar model,

combined with smart and relevant digital extensions can greatly enhance end-user engagement and thereby success rate.

There's still much to be done in regards to individualising the customer experience so it creates sufficient trust, support and motivation from the moment they start interacting and onwards.

We have to crack that code to move onwards and upwards. I'm excited about continued growth for the sector, for the mere reason that the better we become, the more people we're able to help and the healthier and happier we're making the world.

Diversification is a 'hugely positive' change for the industry



Untapped growth potential lies in a physical/digital combo

“

It's a noble industry that's about helping people to be more physically active and is changing the course and the mood of the world

Dave Wright

founder and CEO
Myzone:

An important turning point for the sector was when people began to realise that exercise is medicine. It moved the discussion from a 'nice to have' to a 'must have' offering in society.

There is no doubt that the industry should move into the realm of preventative medicine. Pre- and post-operative care is imperative and governments should be rewarding and backing the sectors which get people moving.

The pandemic has shown that our health has been at the core of our survival. Hopefully studies will continue to support our sector's contribution to this and governments will take note.

We're fortunate our sector is about helping people feel good about themselves irrespective of their ability, religion, gender or political opinions.

It's a noble industry that's about helping people to be more physically active and is changing the course and the mood of the world. I also love the fact this sector is full of energy and people who make working in it enjoyable.



PHOTO: MYZONE



The pandemic highlighted that good health lies at the core of our survival



PHOTO: THIRD SPACE



The rise of the boutique studio and functional training forced everyone to raise the bar, resulting in some phenomenal businesses and solutions

John Penny

**Managing director
The Third Space**

I came from a sports and athletic background, studying sports science, psychology and coaching. Like many, I started my career as a trainer, but then fell in love with the health club business, working in premium high volume clubs in London. I love the performance elements of working as a team, towards the overall cause of improving the quality of people's lives through fitness and exercise.

The rise of the boutique studio and functional training offering really highlighted the improvements we needed to make as a whole in group fitness, exercise programming and the general fitness experience. This forced everyone to raise the bar, resulting in some phenomenal businesses and solutions.

We'll start to see the industry breaking beyond the four walls of clubs. This will involve complete integration of training in club, linked to your wearable, doing a digital class when at home or away, and going on an exercise-related experience for a staycation or vacation.



PHOTO: THIRD SPACE

Generation Z, and beyond, will rotate their lives around a totally holistic wellness experience. We'll also see it breaking further into the realms of e-sports, VR and the metaverse.

I'm most excited about breaking through COVID. Seeing it in the rear view mirror, with everyone enjoying the experiences life has to offer, but with fitness and wellness at the centre means that hopefully all parts of the industry will boom.

Tara Dillon**CEO
CIMSPA**

I had designs on studying medicine as a career when I started working part-time in the local leisure centre as a lifeguard and fitness instructor. I'd always been sporty and loved everything about the job – being able to help and teach people, while keeping fit myself and also earning some money!

One of the most positive things for the industry was the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering in the 1980s. For the first time, this gave local authority leisure the ability to invest and create better facilities, which meant more and better choices for local people. However, I think the model has flipped in the wrong direction over the years, and public leisure has become a bit too commercialised and lost some of its ability to serve all parts of the community.

The sector needs to really grasp its identity and purpose. We have a well-run and competitive commercial sector which serves some of the market, but public leisure needs to optimise its uniqueness and focus on the whole community. We need to take the benefits of what we offer out into communities and really engage with people who need it the most.

COVID-19 has presented enormous challenges to society and the sector could be a big part of the solution, almost an extension of the wider health service. If the political will exists to unlock this potential, we'll be in a very strong position.

“

Public leisure has become too commercialised and lost some of its ability to serve all parts of the community



Public sector leisure must focus on the whole community, says Dillon

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The sector must work to become more inclusive



I'm excited about the sector playing its fullest role in improving people's health and the path to that is clear

Huw Edwards

CEO
UK Active

The fitness and leisure market is relatively young compared to other parts of the sport and physical activity sector, but the biggest change over the past decade has been the efforts to correctly define itself as a viable health solution that can transform the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of millions.

It's a road that we're very much still travelling on, but we're making progress every day.

Next, we need to ensure the sector is fully inclusive for people in the communities it operates within, so a greater diversity of people see it as a solution that works for them. That includes the ongoing importance of raising standards, providing new programmes and services which accommodate all ages and backgrounds, and fully integrating with health services.

I'm really excited about the sector playing its fullest role in improving people's health and wellbeing, and the path to that is clear.

Through our own commitment to growing and developing, and the shared partnership with government



to help the sector, we have the opportunity to create real change.

I like working in a sector that can genuinely transform lives, and we support the agenda to help people everywhere be more active.

I also like the agility, positivity, and attitude of the fitness and leisure sector when it comes to getting things done, as well as the fantastic team I lead here at UK Active.



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Alan Leach**Chair of IHRSA
CEO West Wood Club**

Honestly, I think social media is the most positive development for the industry. Facebook, Instagram and YouTube have influenced so many young people to view fitness and working out as a normal part of life.

In Ireland, for a century, pubs were a licence to print money. Today those pubs are closing and many have been turned into fitness clubs and gyms.

The days of intuitive management in the fitness industry are gone and we should continue to be increasingly professional. To compete in the fitness landscape, club owners need professional marketing, professional sales and professional management. Along with a deep obsession with customer service and member experiences.

I'm excited about the growth potential and if COVID-19 has confirmed one thing in my mind, it's that bricks and mortar clubs have a very bright future, and virtual fitness is simply not going to replace them. I also love the diversity we're seeing in fitness businesses.

It's not all about big-box clubs. The growth in yoga clubs, pilates studios, strength and conditioning gyms, personal training studios is very healthy for our industry. In the next few years, I believe Europe will see the 20 per cent penetration rates you see in the US.

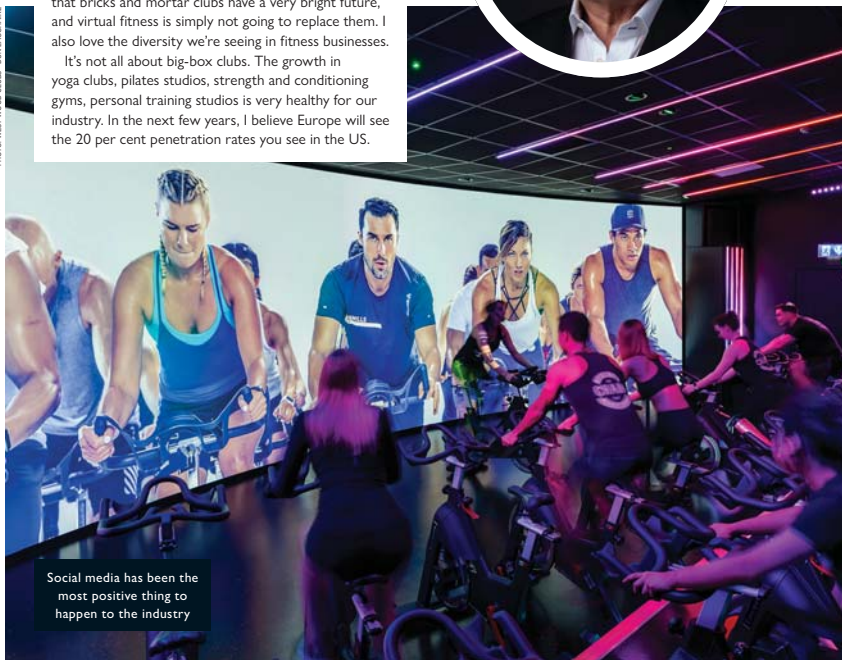
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*In the next few years,
I believe Europe will see
the 20 per cent penetration
rates you see in the US*



PHOTO: ALAN LEACH


PHOTO: WEST WOOD CLUBS - DUN LAOGHAIRE



Social media has been the most positive thing to happen to the industry

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It's time to widen the scope
and focus on supporting
healthy lifestyles



I don't think any other sector has so many people with the passion, commitment and sense of enjoyment we see in health and fitness

PHOTO: EVERYONE ACTIVE

David Bibby

Managing director
Everyone Active:

The involvement of the private sector in the delivery of local authority leisure services has had a major impact on the industry, bringing a real sense of opportunity and awareness. As a result, the industry has become more professional and dynamic and continues to go from strength to strength.

Now we need to focus on bringing these benefits to a much wider cross-section: those who have never previously attended leisure facilities, elderly people or those living an

inactive lifestyle. There are also target groups affected by the pandemic that we could support to begin, or maintain, a healthier lifestyle.

There's a lot to be excited about — one area is the advancements in technology, which will provide many great opportunities. After the past couple of years, there's an increased link between our sector and the medical sector. With the technology now available, employees have the opportunity to monitor data and provide advice and support in person, or through digital platforms and apps.

What makes the sector great is the forward-thinking environment. It continues to evolve. Looking ahead and creating good work environments



PHOTO: EVERYONE ACTIVE

can lead to great opportunities, and continues to motivate me. I don't think any other sector has so many people with the passion, commitment and sense of enjoyment that we see in health and fitness. ●



CORE

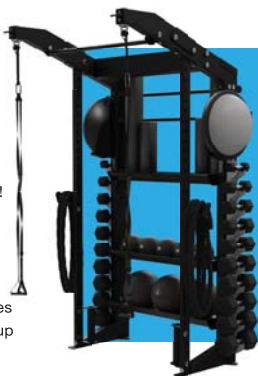
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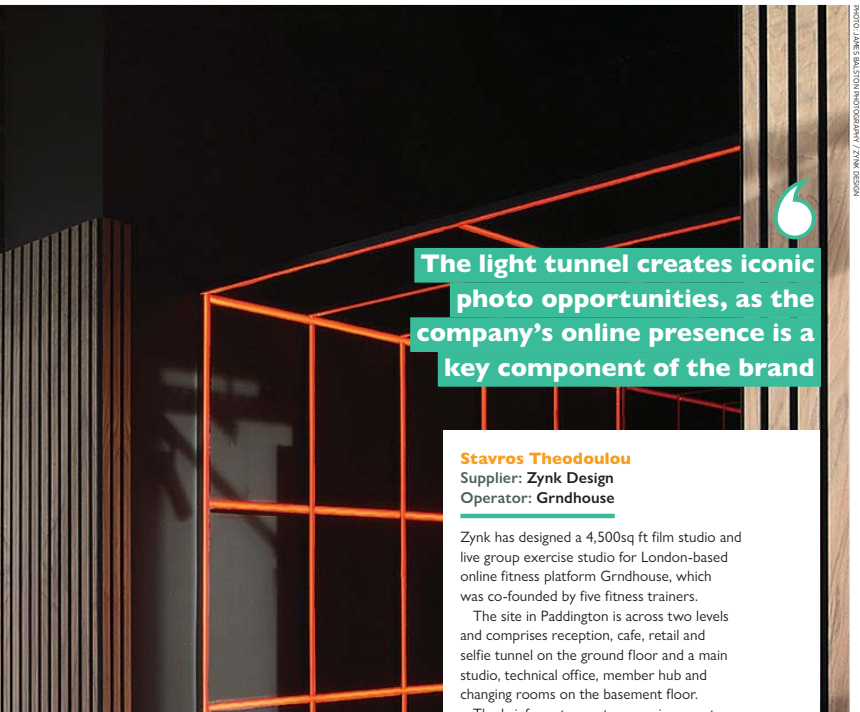
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THE WOW FACTOR

Creating fitness spaces that keep members coming back requires more than just functionality. Designers and suppliers share their latest triumphs with Steph Eaves

The design brief was to create a club space that was unique, dynamic, and full of brand personality



The light tunnel creates iconic photo opportunities, as the company's online presence is a key component of the brand

Stavros Theodoulou

Supplier: Zynk Design

Operator: Grndhouse

Zynk has designed a 4,500sq ft film studio and live group exercise studio for London-based online fitness platform Grndhouse, which was co-founded by five fitness trainers.

The site in Paddington is across two levels and comprises reception, cafe, retail and selfie tunnel on the ground floor and a main studio, technical office, member hub and changing rooms on the basement floor.


The brief was to create an environment which is unique, dynamic and expresses the personality of the brand and the founders.

Textural and tactile finishes, such as pressed cast concrete and slatted walnut panelling come together to create a dynamic, welcoming space. Burnt orange accents take inspiration from the brand colours and add warmth.

A fun feature – the light tunnel – draws attention to the interior and creates an iconic photographic opportunity for members and staff. The company's online presence and community-centric values are key components of the operation.

The studio is designed to adapt from film studio to live class studio, and incorporates an orange LED lighting 'cage' structure that can pulse, fade, beat and trace, either on a programme or when controlled by the instructor.

The vanity room is uplifted by custom-made ring mirror lights. Brushed brass accents within the neutral backdrop add a touch of glamour throughout, linking the vanity area corridor and the warm up area, where tiered seating creates a great pre-workout member hub.



Stavros Theodoulou,
MD of Zynk Design

The Fitbox Container Gym enables outdoor training



PHOTO: INDIGO FITNESS

We designed and manufactured tailor-made equipment to perfectly fit the space

Rob Coleman

Supplier: Indigo Fitness

Operator: Strive Gym

We recently designed Strive Gym, on the island of Jersey. The gym is part of a new, purpose-built 32,000sq ft health club, that has the ambitious goal of becoming an elite training hub. Strive wants to attract the UK's best teams, players and future athletes.

The vision was to build a 'playground to podium' training facility that would cover 10,000sq ft. This challenged us to create intelligent and engaging gym spaces that would cater for regular members as well as professional and developing athletes. The facility needed to provide functional strength and conditioning, diverse group training, combat, yoga, pilates and outdoor training.

We worked closely with Strive senior management, architects and main building contractors from the early stages of the project. Details such as room shape, size and layout, floor constructions and build-ups were considered so we could design and manufacture tailor-made equipment to perfectly fit the

PHOTO: INDIGO FITNESS

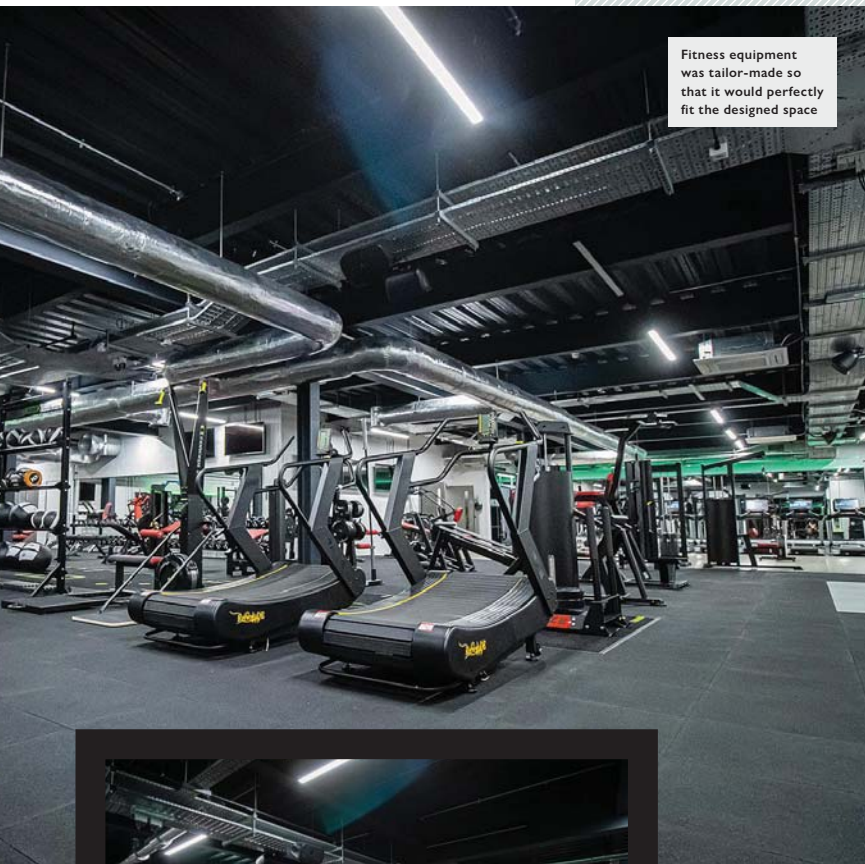


space and utilise the building fabric, delivering a feel of greater space.

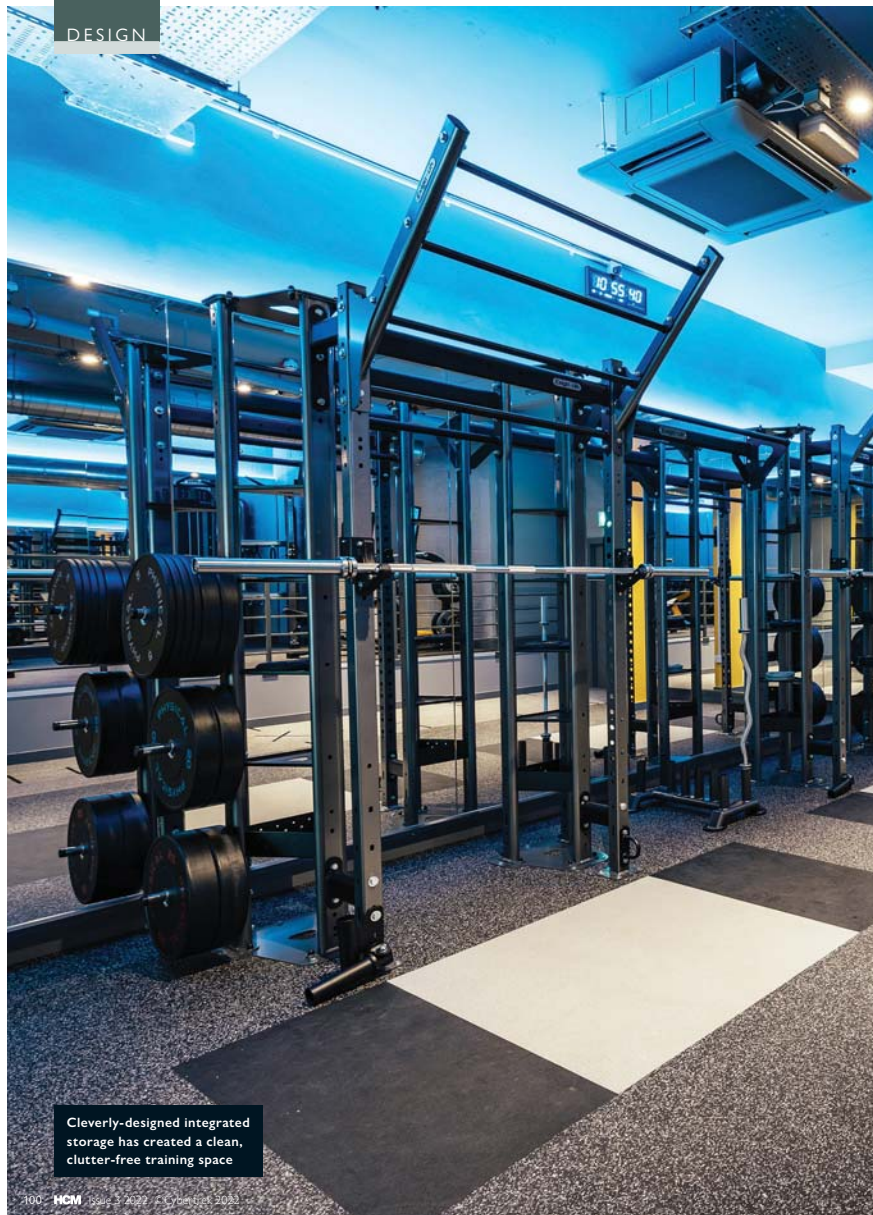
Showstopper pieces were the ceiling and beam mount aerial yoga rig for the yoga studio; a solution that maximised exercise possibilities and use of floor space. The overhead gliding rail systems for the members' studio and dojo allow boxing bags to be traversed into the open training spaces as required. Outdoors, we installed our Fitbox Container Gym within the fence line of a five-a-side 3G pitch, opening onto the turf to deliver outdoor strength and conditioning.

The result is a fantastic training space and member experience that includes separate member and academy training facilities, group training studios, two altitude rooms – one for athlete strength and conditioning and the other part of the group cycling studio experience – separate pilates and yoga studios, and an outdoor training space with 3G pitch and a container gym. The initial dream and vision for the site was met. ▶

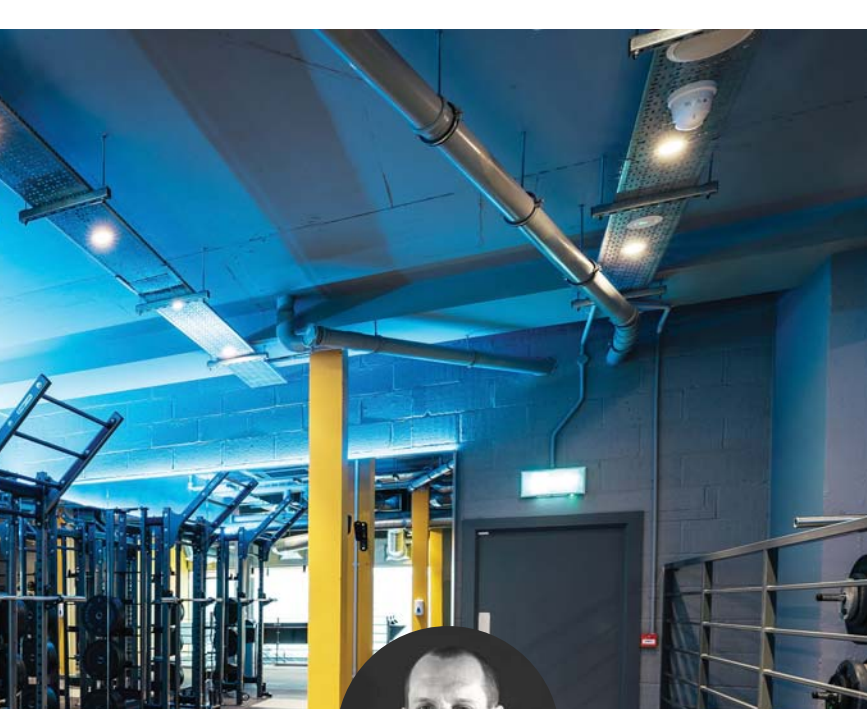
Fitness equipment was tailor-made so that it would perfectly fit the designed space



The site needed an 'intelligent and engaging' gym space to cater for regular members and athletes alike



Cleverly-designed integrated storage has created a clean, clutter-free training space

**Paul Farrell**

Supplier: Physical Company
Operator: Six3nine

When personal training brand Six3nine decided to open its second London-based studio last year, it turned to Physical Company to help replicate the atmosphere and brand of its inaugural site.

For Six3nine, it wasn't just about bringing across the décor and logo, although our custom-branded equipment and turf track ticked that box. It was about ensuring the whole place felt like its first site: the flow between equipment, the floor space and the cool selection of kit. It was about replicating the experience.

Our designs helped Six3nine achieve this goal, with squat racks and Olympic lifting platforms built into



**We wanted
people's first
response on
entering the
gym to be
'where's all
the kit'**

the floor, for example, to create a seamless flow around the gym.

Integrating great storage into our design was also key. At Six3nine, the focus is on bodyweight and free weight training, so the team wanted people's first response on entering the gym to be 'where's all the kit?'

The result is a beautifully clean training space equipped with lifting platforms, dual adjustable pulleys and squat stations alongside portable, multi-functional equipment that can be easily moved between gym floor, studio and storage units for flexible, varied, effective workouts: such as plyo boxes, PBX bags, slam balls, bars, rubber bumpers, dumbbells and pump sets.

It was a pleasure to work with Six3nine to create a space to support its training ethos: teaching clients to better use their bodies through everyday movements. ▶

The internal space needed to look amazing, while providing areas of interest and variety

PHOTO: CORE HEALTH AND FITNESS

Jason Hill

Supplier: Core Health & Fitness
Operator: Everlast

We've been working with large companies such as Everlast to create concepts within bigger environments that can both wow new members and create communities. Everlast was looking for varied concepts within the gym space to allow for both cross-functional training and group workouts.

We worked in partnership with Dan Summerson to create zones within the facility – not fully closed off, but segregated enough to create pockets for members of different needs and to help the growth of micro member communities. The concepts had to flow in terms of the look and feel of the club and needed to not only look amazing, but also provide members with areas of variety and interest which were practical in terms of flow and usage.



The HIIT area at Everlast is a variation on a boutique fitness studio, combining cardio and functional resistance training, but also adding an element of strength work that is not typical in such environments, with the introduction of XTC racks and Olympic bars and plates from Throwdown, one of Core's brands. These elements combined to allow for exciting and innovative group classes, and, during non-class times, allow the space to double up as both a main gym overflow and a personal training hub.

The instructor-led classes focus on fun, motivation and group competition to push members to hit their goals and to be accountable during their workouts, while the 'open time' in the space allows for slightly more private training. There's also a further operational opportunity for area monetisation through one-to-one and small group personal training. ●



We created zones as pockets for members of different needs and to help the growth of micro member communities

The HIIT area at Everlast is a variation on a boutique fitness studio, with space for group classes and PT



PHOTO: CORE HEALTH AND FITNESS

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Thrive Gym offers an engaging, connected experience with Freemotion and iFIT

A TRULY INTERACTIVE, CONNECTED EXPERIENCE



Thrive Gym is the UK's first commercial gym to offer fitness experiences from Freemotion and iFIT, which offer connected experiences for members

Thrive Gym in Rawtenstall, Lancashire, is a destination dedicated to helping the Rossendale Valley community improve physical health and mental wellbeing.

Operating on a no-contract basis, Thrive opened earlier this year and offers flexibility for its members to train in ways that fit their lifestyles.

The £1m club has an expansive gym, three studios – hosting classes from yoga and Pilates to indoor cycling – a healthy eating cafe, juice bar, solarium and a unisex barbershop.

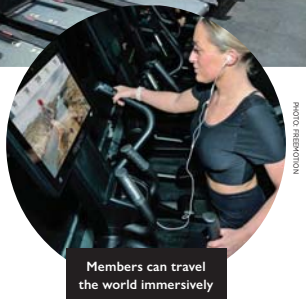
To create a highly engaging, connected, interactive fitness experience, Thrive secured a partnership with Freemotion, becoming the first UK commercial gym to benefit from offering members the full scale of iFIT's award-winning, on-demand platform.

At the heart of the gym experience is a wide range of Freemotion equipment – from incline trainers and treadmills to ellipticals and indoor bikes – which connect Thrive members to iFIT's global community of 7.3 million users in 120 countries.

Live and on-demand

Through the Freemotion kit, members have unlimited access to thousands of live and on-demand, coach-led workouts, filmed in the world's most breathtaking destinations. In addition, the 20,000 sq ft gym also includes inclusive cable strength training Freemotion machines, which are ideal for members of all fitness abilities, including those with disabilities.

"You've got to look at everybody's needs and think about all demographics," says Tony Ali, Freemotion's country manager.



Members can travel the world immersively

"Everyone deserves a community – these are the values Thrive holds. They're not faceless. Members are always greeted with a smile.

"Every member can access a fitness experience like no other and have the opportunity to travel the world without leaving Lancashire. Through the Freemotion and iFIT experience, Thrive members work out around the world alongside hundreds of top athletes and celebrity trainers who'll adjust the equipment to match the on-screen terrain.

"Another reason the team at Thrive chose Freemotion for its members was because of its progressive, accessible strength training equipment. These machines are brilliant for anyone undergoing rehab or training after an injury," said Ali. ●



Every member can access a fitness experience like no other

Tony Ali

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Clubbercise classes deliver proven results for fitness facilities. We speak to Simon Blay, group exercise coordinator at CV Life, to find out more



Clubbercise delivers compelling group exercise

PHOTO: CLUBBERCISE / SARAH BEN HANSON

LIGHT UP YOUR GROUP EX

When did you launch Clubbercise?

We launched in 2017 and run weekly sessions at four out of our five centres. We offer five sessions a week and this year we're seeing class numbers continuing to be high performers with members coming from all over the area.

What impact has Clubbercise had?

It's had a massive and positive impact on new, old, and prospective members. The studios are full, and the choice of music and choreography is helping growth

at all sites. Our brilliant team of Clubbercise instructors is building relationships which help us retain the current members.

What would you say are the biggest benefits of Clubbercise?

The opportunity to offer classes to such a wide range of clients. Also, to have the party back after all the lockdowns is helping our business grow, members are returning and it's helping us reach out to new members of all walks of life.

● **More:** www.clubbercise.com



The studios are full, and the music and choreography are helping growth at all sites

Simon Blay

About Clubbercise

A well-established concept

Clubbercise launched in 2013 and has won numerous industry awards, most recently, it was crowned Best Dance Brand at the 2021 National Community Fitness Awards. Today, there are roughly 100,000 people taking regular Clubbercise classes.

The key to its success is its mass appeal – from those who are just starting out on their fitness journey to music fans and cardio lovers.

Classes have a nightclub atmosphere, the lights are dimmed

and everyone uses a pair of reusable Clubbercise LED glow sticks.

The darkened environment makes Clubbercise highly attractive to beginners, as one of the main barriers to exercise shown by customer surveys is "not being fit enough" or "not knowing the moves". At Clubbercise that's less of an issue.

Making fitness fun

Clubbercise classes help people fall in love with fitness, which means that they're more likely to stick

around and they're also more likely to tell their friends. The cleverly integrated cardio, toning, combat, and plyometric moves increase the fitness benefits, and with a need to get people back into venues, having a leading, enjoyable group exercise concept on the timetable is essential.

Extra profits

Clubbercise glow sticks have an average profit of £2.50 per pair. There's also a healthy 15 per cent profit to be made on Clubbercise-branded clothing and accessories.

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The integration with Fisikal is driving the success of Fitness First PTs

Fisikal integrates with the FFX app

Revolutionising PT engagement

Fitness First has made personal training more accessible by deploying new levels of digitalisation in partnership with Fisikal

Fitness First UK has partnered with Fisikal to integrate PT bookings into its FFX app, making PT more accessible and attractive. The integration is now live across all 45 UK clubs.

"Moving PT bookings into a digital space means members can now self-manage their fitness experience from anywhere, 24/7," says Keith Shaw, head of personal training.

"By making it as simple as possible for members to view trainer profiles, explore packages and connect directly with a trainer, we've improved the visibility and accessibility of the service, making it easier for members to engage.

"By repositioning how we promote PT and moving bookings and payments

online, our self-employed PTs focus less on admin and more on members. This not only delivers a more personalised experience, it also creates an environment where PTs can thrive.

"The booking integration on the app gives members access to book anything from 60-minute one-to-one sessions to 30-minute small group sessions and options to book directly into a trainer's schedule. We're finding that, by booking direct, paying and receiving automated reminders, fewer members are cancelling, which is great news for PTs.

All new members are also offered a complimentary one-to-one session, as well as the option to purchase discounted PT sessions to get them started on their fitness journey with

us. We're recording an attendance rate upwards of 70 per cent – double what we saw before launching the app.

"Moving PT management online means we can also set up and run promotions more easily. For example, on Blue Monday we ran one to turn the day 'Red', offering members not engaged in PT, a credit for a free session.

"We had hundreds of members sign up, creating a rich source of potential clients for our trainers.

Our partnership with Fisikal has been instrumental to the success of our PT booking integration.

Being able to activate promotions quickly in response to member behaviour or market trends has the potential to revolutionise our PT engagement.

In addition to enhancing the experience for members and trainers, the ability to pull real-time reports, detailing the commercial performance of our PT business on an estate-wide level empowers us to make swift operational adjustments that minimise risk and maximise opportunities." ●

● www.fisikal.com

New members are offered a complimentary one-to-one session, and the option to buy discounted PT to get them started. We're recording attendances upwards of 70 per cent – double the pre-app level

Keith Shaw, head of personal training, Fitness First UK

Product innovation



Steph Eaves rounds up the latest launches in health and fitness

Ogio fitness bags are designed for durability, says Michael Birch

Ogio Europe has launched a new range of fitness bags featuring smart storage solutions, durable fabrics and time saving accessories that can be retailed by gyms.

The bags were created with the aim of making professional sport and

hobbies easier to prepare for.

A new 10L Fitness Pack has been created with outdoor sports in mind. Equipped with a hydration bladder built inside, reflective straps and light loop, and complete with reflective accents, adjustable sternum strap and a hard-shell accessory pocket, these fitness packs are designed to keep athletes hydrated while on the move.

For gym goers, the Locker Duffel Bag has been made to fit into rectangular lockers. Featuring five external pockets, a separate compartment for shoes and textured rubber feet

on the base, this locker bag has been made to keep gym kits clean and organised. The inside of the Locker Duffel Bag opens like a book, to show all of the kit inside, while standing up.

Alongside the Fitness Pack and Locker Bag, Ogio has also launched a classic Fitness Duffel Bag in two sizes and three colourways. Available in both 35L and 45L capacity, these duffels are custom built to store high quantities of fitness equipment.

The Fitness Duffel Bag features a compartment for shoes, a wet/dry pocket at the bottom of the bag, for towel



PHOTO: OGIO

● The new fitness bags are made with durable materials

storage and stowable shoulder straps, to change the style of bag from duffel to backpack.

fitness-kit.net/keyword/ogio

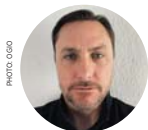


PHOTO: OGIO

Our brand strives to create innovative products

Michael Birch

Vaask's hand sanitising fixture marries aesthetics with hygiene, says Jon Olsen

Vaask, the hand hygiene company, has launched a permanent, touchless hand sanitising fixture, designed to be built into the walls of spas and health clubs.

The system offers precise sanitiser delivery and demonstrates a facility's commitment to cleanliness and its concern for customer and employee safety.

"Hand sanitising dispensers are a necessity in the spa and it's essential these amenities complement the design aesthetic," said Jon Olsen, Vaask founder.

The cast aluminium wall fixture is available in custom powder coating, plated metal or bespoke finishes. It can hold up to two (refillable) litres of alcohol-based gel and features a precision pump control to prevent leakage or contamination.

The PalmPilot hand sensor also automatically retracts away – preventing drips.



PHOTO: VAASK

It's essential these amenities complement the design aesthetic

Jon Olsen

The unit is easy to install and service, and is hard-wired to AC power, so does not require batteries. fitness-kit.net/keyword/vaask

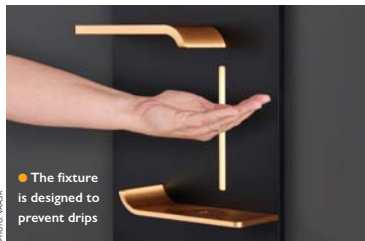


PHOTO: VAASK

● The fixture is designed to prevent drips

Matrix Fitness has introduced a new immersive cycling experience, says **Rob Knox**

Matrix Fitness, one of the world's fastest-growing commercial fitness brands, has launched its Virtual Training Cycle, an immersive training experience that delivers exclusive programmes, streaming of music, movies and shows and access to instructor-led content on the gym floor to boost the user experience.

The high-performance cycle features a 22" touchscreen with an app-based interface similar to other touchscreen consoles in the Matrix cardio portfolio. The in-built Matrix-exclusive programmes include the 20-minute Sprint 8 HIIT, Virtual Active forward-motion HD destination footage and Target Training which tracks watts, heart rate, RPMs, distance or calories. Users will stay motivated by gauging progress through engaging graphics and intuitive colours and will also have access to



The Matrix Virtual Training Cycle – an immersive training experience

iFIT live and on-demand experiential studio and outdoor workouts.

"We believe the Virtual Training Cycle is the best upright bike on the market, giving members the same riding experience as a class, but at a time that best fits their busy schedules," said Rob Knox, product director for Matrix. "By listening to our customers, we discovered their users wanted a variety of content and options to keep them engaged."

"Better yet, the on-demand workouts provided through our partnership with iFIT, paired with our Matrix-

Riders feel they have a new way to ride every time

Rob Knox

exclusive content, will ensure riders feel they have a new way to ride every time, at the touch of a button."

The Virtual Training Cycle is precision-engineered with a freewheel featuring magnetic resistance, intuitive four-way adjustment, a contoured seat and multi-position handlebars that simulate the feel of real road riding.

For easy maintenance, the cycle features quick-release service panels, easily removable pedal cranks and clearly identifiable internal components.

"The Virtual Training Cycle brings together the experience of a group cycling class and familiar operation of standard cardio equipment," adds Knox. "Users and gym owners will appreciate the continuity of our user experience and connectivity across all of our equipment on the cardio floor, ensuring a unified aesthetic and an intuitive, engaging experience for all."

More: www.matrixfitness.co.uk

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD**
Matrix Fitness

VIRTUAL TRAINING CYCLE HIGHLIGHTS

- Console with easy electronic resistance adjustment, plus automatic resistance changes to keep members in sync with programming and on track for their goals
- Bluetooth connectivity and ANT+ compatibility lets members connect a wide range of personal devices, including smartphones, wireless headphones and heart rate tracking devices
- Connects to Apple Watch for more accurate workout tracking and consolidated user data
- Power-save mode and auto wake-up bring the console to life when members step onto the equipment
- Wi-fi compatibility makes it easy to connect in the way that works best for the facility
- Single-point user login automatically loads personal preferences every time members log in, while RFID login offers a touch-free way for members to get started
- USB port allows members to charge their personal devices while keeping their screens in view

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Smart content is the future of fitness, with the potential to impact exercisers in the same way that targeted ads revolutionised the online advertising industry

Ernst de Neef, CEO



● The new Funxion system gives high level consumer insights

Funxion's new Portal enables operators to react more quickly to the needs of their customers, says Ernst de Neef

Funxion is enhancing its platform with an emphasis on making it easier for brands to attract and retain members using customer-generated data and content.

The pandemic has accelerated the need for operators to understand the needs and wishes of customers across all channels in order to provide real added value. Despite operators working hard to create enough content to satisfy their customers, they're still missing the data and insights to deliver a personalised service that reflects their members' unique preferences and interests.

Data-driven content

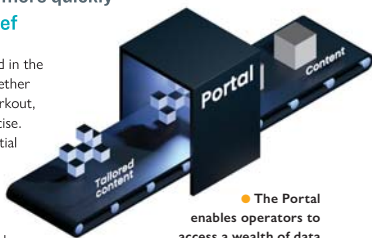
Funxion's new direction will make use of the full potential of smart data to help operators compete against challenging fitness competition online.

All Funxion, third party and client-created content that's uploaded to the platform will be combined into

one structure and measured in the same way, regardless of whether it's an on-demand class, workout, training plan, or single exercise.

This will unlock the potential for operators to access a wealth of data they can use to determine what content matches their customer demands and what will increase the chances of their members returning.

In light of constantly changing customer demands, Funxion's vision is to open up the potential for predictive modelling that helps operators quickly react to what their customers are going to request and in what quantities. To facilitate this, Funxion will focus on allowing operators to combine on-demand classes and workouts to create specific training plans, as well as uploading and creating other user-driven materials, such as new member onboarding programmes.



● The Portal enables operators to access a wealth of data

Easy integration

Funxion's enhanced platform allows operators to access and play data-driven content via an enhanced API that supports SDK, mobile, web and in-club applications. This pivot amplifies Funxion's 360° vision by facilitating intelligent content across all platforms, opening up the opportunity for existing partners in the fitness industry and new markets that need smart content. ●

More: www.funxion.com

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD**
Funxion

BOX12 is evolving its offering with its new Pod, says Jamie Cartwright

The latest product launch from BOX12 is the BOX12 Pod. The free-standing boxing and functional fitness

pod is designed to fit into a club or corporate setting. It features an optional touch screen that takes users through a journey of pre-set training programmes.

The Pod allows those who cannot attend a class or prefer to train solo to receive guidance and expert instruction. It's fully loaded with functional kit.

A consumer Pod is due to be launched in May 2022.

BOX12 co-founder Jamie Cartwright says: "The BOX12 product offering



PHOTO: BOX12

● The BOX 12 Pod provides guidance through its touchscreen

is evolving rapidly. As demand for boxing-for-fitness products expands to suit users' needs, BOX12 is committed to ensuring we're the go-to company for the industry."

BOX12 was born in 2019 and is the brainchild of friends and entrepreneurs Jamie Cartwright and Jon Eade, of Hattton Boxing. fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD** BOX12

PHOTO: BOX12



BOX12 is committed to ensuring we're the go-to company for the industry
Jamie Cartwright

1FitLife's new Presenter Bootcamps teach instructors on-camera skills, says Anna Langridge

Digital workout specialist 1FitLife is training fitness instructors across the UK to deliver 'rock star' performances on screen.

The one day 'Presenter Bootcamps', which take place at the 1FitLife



PHOTO: 1FITLIFE

● The bootcamps teach instructors how to convey personality and impact

studios in Bournemouth, teach the specific skills instructors need in order to convey personality online, through tone, pace, pitch and emphasis. This helps instructors to deliver on-brand, impactful classes on demand.

The bootcamps are available to operators as well as individual fitness

professionals wanting to expand their knowledge and experience, and the training can be adjusted to include specific operator brand direction, content and styling requirements.

Anna Langridge, director of production and host of the bootcamps says: "Being a successful group-ex trainer in a club doesn't necessarily

make you a good trainer on camera. It's more important than ever that an operator's on-demand offer stands out from its competitors, and should always go above and beyond what someone could access for free online.

"Being in a film studio is unfamiliar territory for many fitness instructors and our practical workshop is designed to give people the confidence to work successfully with a full film crew in a studio."

Langridge has been in the production and fitness industry for 20 years, and has been directing on-demand workouts for the last seven years.

The new bootcamps combine a mixture of skill learning and practical sessions.

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD** 1FitLife

PHOTO: ANDREW BARNES/1FITLIFE



Our workshop gives people the confidence to work with a film crew
Anna Langridge

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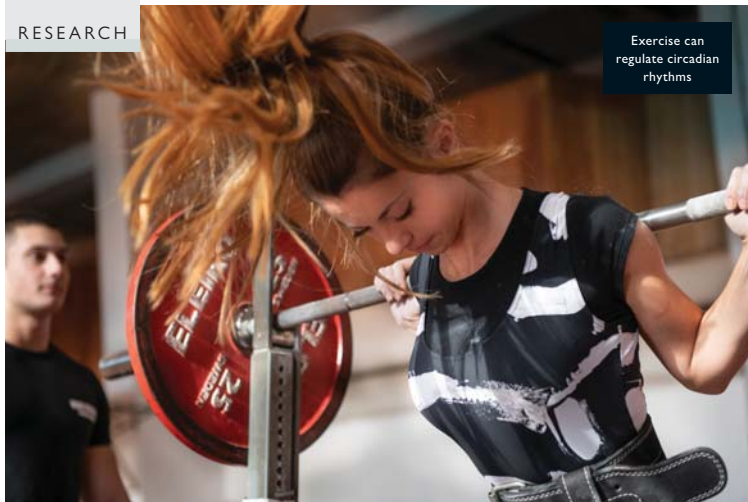
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Great timing

Ground-breaking research from the Center for Basic Metabolic Research at the University of Copenhagen has established the best times of day to exercise

An international team of scientists has carried out a study to help gauge how and why exercise performed at different times of the day can have different effects on the body.

The research focused on how the body produces different health-promoting signalling molecules which have a broad impact on health, influencing sleep, memory, exercise performance and metabolic homeostasis.

Researchers looked at how exercise can produce the signalling molecules in an organ-specific manner depending on the time of day.

The result is the publication of an *Atlas of Exercise Metabolism* – a complete map of exercise-induced signalling molecules present in different tissues following exercise at different times of day.

About the findings

Jonas Thue Treebak, co-first author of the study and associate professor at the Center for Basic Metabolic Research at the University of Copenhagen, said the study is the first of its kind and will have an impact on exercise regimes.

"Not only do we show how different tissues respond to exercise at different times of the day,

Exercise can help to 'realign' faulty circadian rhythms in specific tissues – these have been linked to increased risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes

but we also propose how these responses are connected to induce an orchestrated adaptation that controls systemic energy homeostasis," he said.

Other new insights from the study include a deeper understanding of how tissues communicate with each other, and how exercise can help to 'realign' faulty circadian rhythms in specific tissues – faulty circadian clocks have been linked to increased risks of obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Shogo Sato, fellow co-first author and assistant professor at the Department of Biology and the Center for Biological Clocks Research at Texas A&M University, added: "It's an important study that helps to direct further research that can help us better understand how exercise – if timed correctly – can help to improve health."

More: www.hcmmag.com/circadian



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