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LATEST INDUSTRY STATS

UK ► **Leisure Database**

Europe ► **Deloitte**

Latin America ► **IHRSA**

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talks about his
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Real-time revolution

The best management and policy decisions are made in light of sound knowledge of customer preferences and behaviour. An ambitious new industry collaboration is enabling operators across the activity sector to raise their game through access to real-time customer data

A few years back, in the days when nationwide participation numbers were mainly established by market research, the CEO of a leading management contracting company told me that if official figures were accurate, he'd be out of business.

Happily he was able to report record attendances, but his experience – that some official numbers didn't reflect his reality – was shared by other operators and policymakers and this meant that decisions made on the basis of these numbers were not optimal at best and ineffective at worst.

Today we're in transition between that time – when market research data was the bedrock of decision-making – and a new era of real-time data, when we can analyse what's *actually* going on to inform decision- and policy-making.

Eventually we'll no longer need a representative market research sample, because our 'sample' will be all users.

This thinking is coming to our sector and in this issue (page 72) we talk to the team behind the DataHub, an initiative through which operators, trade bodies and tech companies are collaborating to create a platform for real-time activity data.

The DataHub currently records a million transactions a day, taken from 157 operators in 1,200 locations. The ambitious aim for 2018 is to get this to 750 million transactions a day and to extend eventually into all sectors of the industry.

The data is anonymised and standardised to ensure like for like comparisons and then used for analytics and benchmarking. "For the first time, operators are actively sharing data so that everyone can make better decisions," DataHub's Phil White told *Health Club Management*.

ukactive is also on board: "We'll be integrating ukactive's benchmarking service with the DataHub platform, so that business performance benchmarking underpins everything we do," says ukactive's Steve Mann in our report.

The DataHub is now also open to non facility-based activity providers, such as bootcamps, making it ever more



The DataHub enables us to understand customer behaviour

ukactive's benchmarking service will be integrated with the DataHub, so performance benchmarking underpins the entire service

representative of the nations' 'active journeys'. The eventual aim is a comprehensive, detailed view of the entire market.

Many industries such as food retailing and travel have used real-time data for years to drive business, yet up until now, our sector hasn't had access to these powerful tools.

We've seen the launch and failure of three major benchmarking initiatives over the years. It's time for all operators to back this one to take us to a new level of excellence across health, fitness and activity and enable operators to build services consumers really need.

Liz Terry, editor
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Olympian Zac Purchase on his thriving new gym venture

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE GYM GROUP



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A recent report has found that having good cardiorespiratory fitness may cut the risk of death in men who suffer from depression or anxiety by up to half

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The power of data

Real-time activity data could pave the way for a new era of customer insight. The DataHub currently holds information from 157 health, fitness, sport and leisure operators relating to the visits of seven million individuals

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



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Data sharing is enabling industry benchmarking for the first time

health club management

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PEOPLE



We're not aiming to produce Olympic athletes, but to support people who are new to, or returning to exercise to get the best out of themselves



ZAC PURCHASE

OLYMPIC ROWER AND OWNER, ZAC FITNESS

How did you get into rowing?

The main reason was because I was useless at everything else like rugby, football or cricket, so the only option for me was getting into a boat.

I enjoyed rowing and won my first race at the age of 14, kept going and then one day found myself on the start line at the Olympics.

Mark Hunter and I took gold at Beijing, in the lightweight men's double sculls and set the Olympic record, which still stands. We narrowly missed out on gold again at the London Olympics, after which I retired, at the age of 26.



Purchase won gold in Beijing and silver in London

Do you miss the days of being an Olympic athlete?

No, not at all. I really didn't like the relentless training, it was boring, tedious, monotonous and repetitive. I hated every second of it.

On the other hand I absolutely love racing, and the chance to put myself up against the best in the world. There's no better feeling than winning!

It was also very restrictive. Being a lightweight athlete, I had to weigh in two hours before the race and if I didn't make the weight I couldn't even race, which was a lot of pressure.

I was always hungry – 70kg is quite skinny, bearing in mind I'm 88kg now and much happier. We trained

for four or five hours a day and only consumed 1,000-1,500 calories a day during the summer race season. You started training absolutely starving and eventually became numb to it.

Having a severely restricted diet was one of the sacrifices for a gold medal. However, I absolutely loved racing and being on the start line.

How has all that experience helped you as a personal trainer?

I've learned the importance of making training fun! At my studio, Zacs, we do varied sessions that are updated all the time, to keep them fresh and exciting.

We're not aiming to produce Olympic athletes, but to support people who are new to, or returning to exercise to get

the best out of themselves. We have a huge variety of clients: aged from 10 to 72 and lots of parents who come with their children to do a class together.

Zacs Fitness launched last October – what's the concept?

I have a real passion for functional exercise, so we don't use much equipment and have developed our own slam balls, power bands, stretch mats, kettle bells and suspension trainers.

Classes have a maximum of 10 people, which allows good interaction with the instructor. I think this is a big part of giving people

the confidence and knowledge to feel empowered. Although I have some one-to-one clients, the majority go for the small group exercise classes.

It's a pay as you go model. Fitness classes, yoga and spin are all £10 a session. We've got a popular loyalty card scheme, where you pay for nine classes and get the 10th free. We give a lot of support and our clients say the quality of what they get is much more than if they worked out on their own.

No one wants to spend hours in the gym doing the same old thing, so we keep things short, sharp and interesting, with as great a benefit as possible in the shortest time. We're always interested in finding ways to give our clients the means to make the best use of their time, and



Purchase has a personal passion for functional fitness

DNA tests have proved to be a good way of helping people to get results sooner. It's a much more targeted approach.

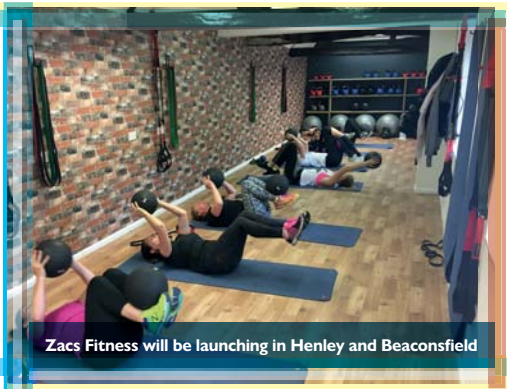
What are your future plans?

We're constantly evolving, based on what our clients tell us they want. In June we're launching a full spin programme and now I'm considering introducing a form of live heart rate monitoring.

I'm looking to launch the next couple of studios in Beaconsfield and Henley before rolling the concept out to more towns across the South East.

What is the best part of working in the health and fitness sector?

It's heartening to witness more people starting to value exercise and realise that being active and healthy will support their life long-term. It's great to be part of that and try to help people realise that going to the gym doesn't have to be soulless. ▶



Zacs Fitness will be launching in Henley and Beaconsfield



I came up with the pen pal scheme as a way of engaging schools: they can use Born to Move as a cross curricular activity, allowing youngsters to learn about different languages, countries and cultures.



JUSTINE WILLIAMS

LES MILLS BORN TO MOVE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

► What is Born to Move?

Set up over five years ago, this programme is the first from Les Mills to be aimed at children. As the early years are a critical window for forming positive habits, we are on a mission to get more children moving.

BORN TO MOVE uses dance, yoga, martial arts and athletic skills set to music. There are a number of classes aimed at different age groups: starting with two to three-year-olds and going up to adolescents.

The programme fits in with education, public sector, charitable and CSR agendas. A research study with Edge Hill University showed that two 30-minute Born to Move classes per week brought increased muscular and cardiovascular benefits, as well as improved confidence in being active and provided increased levels of physical activity to support a PE lesson, where the focus is on learning skills.

What was the motivation for setting it up?

Young people are born to move, but in our modern world they are losing out on the opportunities for active play and the fundamental skills and self esteem which that develops. Reduced physical activity is a major contributor to chronic health problems and there's growing evidence of a direct link between fitness and academic and social success.

How did the pen pal scheme come about?

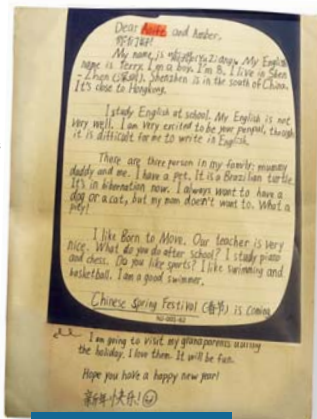
My role is to introduce BORN TO MOVE to sectors focusing on improving levels of youth physical activity, demonstrating how flexible and adaptive the programming can be in different sectors. I came up with the pen pal scheme as a way of engaging schools: they can use BORN TO MOVE as a cross curricular activity, allowing youngsters to link being

active with learning about different languages, countries and cultures.

So far we have kicked off one successful project, linking a Yorkshire primary school with a school in Shenzhen, China. The children filmed themselves doing the same workout, shared the results and then wrote letters to each other, asking questions like what they ate for breakfast and if they had any pets. The letters were posted and they were all delighted to receive letters from across the world.

How are you planning to take the programme forward?

Going forward, we want to encourage more schools, in more countries, to get involved. As well as networking with schools, I'm speaking to uKactive about how to roll it out. Ultimately, I would love to be involved with Change 4 Life and also get the pen pal scheme working outside of schools as well, which is something the health and fitness sector could engage with.



A letter between students



Pupils in Shenzhen, China were linked up with a school in Yorkshire

Williams wants
to link the penpal
scheme with
Change 4 Life





We want to provide an intervention at primary school to get kids active and healthy.



IAN PICKLES & IMOGEN BUXTON-PICKLES

FOUNDERS OF IMOVES

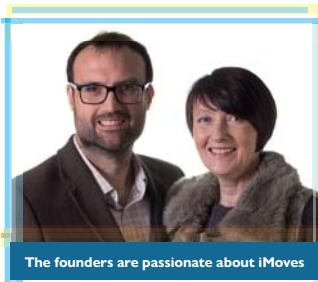
► What is iMoves?

It's an easy solution for teachers to deliver PE and dance in schools. Package licences are sold to schools, which allow teachers to access resources through an online portal. We provide everything teachers need to deliver a range of engaging activity and PE lessons: interactive demonstration videos, curriculum based lesson plans, music, flashcards and a range of assessment tools.

Our aim is to get children active every day with lessons and activities that engage them. We're not teaching them to chase or pirouette, but just some basic moves, and if they really like it they can go on to join a club.

What's your mission?

We want to provide an intervention at primary school to get kids active and healthy. Our pitch at the ukactive Active Lab Live centred around a character called John: at five-years-old he was fit and active, but by 11 was overweight, because he had done his two hours a week of PE, but nothing else. Neither his parents or teachers had the confidence, or ideas, to get him active every day. By 25, he is



The founders are passionate about iMOVES

overweight, embarrassed to join a gym and doesn't know where to start with losing weight and getting active. We want to stop all the Johns from happening.

How did iMoves come about?

I [Imogen] have spent all my career in fitness and dance, working in schools to help them offer better quality lessons and then they started to ask for resources to do the lessons when I wasn't there. I realised this was a business opportunity, so started to produce DVDs and put content on line. Both the kids and teachers

loved the resources we produced and it's built from there.

Lots of teachers lack the confidence and training to deliver exercise and dance classes themselves, so this was meeting a need. Many of the existing resources being used were very old fashioned and didn't engage the children – such as dance that entailed pretending to be a tree. It was death by dance!

The business gained momentum two years ago, when schools started asking for resources for PE in general and gymnastics, so we developed the package to include gymnastics, Pilates, physical literacy, athletics and ball skills. Ian left his career in brand strategy and came on board as business manager.

What have you achieved?

We're a small company with a great concept. Already we have 500 schools around the UK using iMoves. We've just won ukactive's ActiveLab, which has taken us to a new level. In the last two years we've taken on staff and now have eight presenters around the country.

We're constantly evolving to offer more programmes. For example, to engage boys we have programmes that include football, combat moves and war dances to music. At the other end of the spectrum, we offer a range of mindfulness lessons and Pilates to funky music.

What about future plans?

Research shows that an active child is more academic with grades up to 13 per cent higher. So, in September, we'll be launching Active Schools, which offers 30 minutes of activity outside of PE and can be linked with different subjects. We'll also team up with ukactive on National Fitness Day as the digital platform for schools, trying to get 10,000 schools to be active for 10 minutes at 10am.

Next year, we'll be launching Active Home, to encourage children to carry on the work they've been doing at school when they go home. ●

Buxton-Pickles has a background in fitness and dance, and has worked in schools



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Number of US gym users hits record high

More than 66m Americans used a gym in 2016, a record high since the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) began tracking health club consumer statistics in 1987.

Based on a study by the association that feeds into the 2017 *Physical Activity Council Participation Report*, results show that the number of individual members totalled 57.3m last year, up 3.6 per cent from 55.3m in 2015.

Members visited their health club an average of 106 times last year. Of the 296.6m Americans aged six and older, 19.3 per cent were gym members in 2016.

Joe Moore, IHRSA's president and CEO, said: "Consumers continue to rely on health clubs



The US market is showing healthy growth

as the primary outlet for physical activity and health goals. Increased participation in fitness activities helped fuel growth in memberships and utilisation as total club visits surpassed 5bn for the fifth consecutive year."

In 2016, US health club revenue increased to US\$27.6bn (£21.5bn, €25.6bn), up from US\$25.8bn (£20.1bn, €24bn) in 2015, a rise of 7.2 per cent.

In May, the 2016 *National Health Interview Survey*



Consumers continue to rely on health clubs as the primary outlet for physical activity

Joe Moore

showed that more than half of Americans are now getting the recommended amount of exercise – for the first time since records began.

More: http://lei.sr?a=m5A2S_H

CA\$13m 'aqua-gym' complex for Quebec



Philippe Couillard

The government of Canada and Quebec municipality have each pledged to invest CA\$4.4m (€4m, £3.4m) for the construction of a large-scale aqua-gym complex in the town of Dolbeau-Mistassini, the government of which will fund the same amount.

The facility will feature an indoor waterpark, including a shallow pool, slides and water games; a six-lane pool; two diving areas; a sauna; two mezzanines; and a gymnasium.

"Cultural and recreational infrastructure helps make our



We're realising a project that the city has been carrying out since 2013

Philippe Couillard

communities places where families can have fun, where neighbours can get together and where Canadians can celebrate the many cultures that make up our country," said Amarjeet Sohi, Canada's minister of infrastructure.

"Our government is proud to make investments that

improve people's quality of life while fostering economic growth and creating high-paying middle class jobs."

The premier of Quebec, Philippe Couillard, added the new facility will encourage people to adopt an active lifestyle and allow "young people to practice sport or physical activity of their choice in the best possible environment."

"We are realising a project that the city has been carrying out since 2013," he said.

More: http://lei.sr?a=x4R5a_H



The new room type features indoor bikes from Wattbike

Hotel giant Hilton launches in-room fitness concept

Hilton has unveiled a new in-room wellness concept, Five Feet to Fitness, which brings more than 11 different fitness equipment and accessory options into the hotel room.

Ryan Crabbe, senior director of global wellness for Hilton, described the room as an "industry first."

"The room is really a personal wellbeing stage, but we like to describe it as a guestroom dedicated to movement and

mindfulness," he told *Spa Opportunities*. "It really is the first of its kind hybrid room."

The new room type features an indoor bike from British cycling innovator Wattbike that can be used for either longer exercise sessions or focused interval-training workouts, and dynamic Gym Rax functional training stations.

More: http://lei.sr?a=D8P7w_H

24 Hour Fitness continues expansion push

US-based health club chain 24 Hour Fitness has kept up its rapid pace of expansion with two new club openings in May.

The two new clubs – in Portland, Oregon and Castle Rock, Colorado – take the number of clubs in the group's portfolio closer to 450.

The 40,000sq ft, two-story club in Castle Rock has been designed as an open-floor plan gym.

Facilities include large studio spaces for indoor cycling

and GX24 studio classes, a functional training area and a full-sized basketball court. There is also a "Turf Zone" – a new addition to 24 Hour Fitness – featuring a strip of artificial grass fitted with specialised fitness equipment. Wet facilities include a spa, indoor lap pool and sauna.

The 38,000sq ft club in Portland has similar facilities, but also houses a TRX area.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Y2y8K_H



René Moos

Basic-Fit reports rising revenues in first quarter

René Moos's gym chain Basic-Fit reported revenues of €76.9m (US\$83.6m, £64.8m) in the first three months of the year as the group opened more clubs and grew membership numbers.

The low-cost European fitness operator's latest trading update shows that year-on-year revenues were

up 27 per cent from €60.5m (US\$65.8m, £51m) in 2016.

Memberships increased to 1.33m in the first three months of 2017, a rise of 24 per cent from 1.08m in 2016.

Basic-Fit is on track to open 100 clubs this year after increasing its network by 21 to 440 during Q1.

More: http://lei.sr?a=C6q4w_H

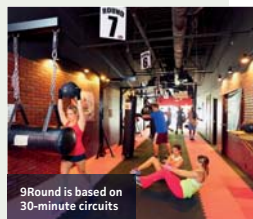
Kickboxing gym operator 9Round aims for 1,000 sites

The convenience factor makes the concept appealing to the masses

Kickboxing-themed gym operator 9Round has opened its 500th location in Orlando, Florida, US.

The franchise-based business has expanded rapidly since its launch nine years ago and now has a presence in 11 countries and 40 US states.

9Round – founded by former middleweight kickboxing world champion Shannon "The Cannon" Hudson – offers members specialised kickboxing fitness training based on 30-minute, full body training sessions undertaken in circuit format.



9Round is based on 30-minute circuits

The 9Round system consists of nine, three-minute stations of activities – including cardio, weight training and core exercises, plus kicks and punches on speed bags.

A real boxing bell rings to begin and end the workouts, while members have a 30-second active break between rounds to recover.

More: http://lei.sr?a=F9f6E_H



Sessions are fast-paced
 with a strong
 community element
 Rob Deutsch

Aussie fitness studio F45 targets UK expansion

Australian fitness franchise F45 has sold 50 franchises in the UK with 15 studios expected to be up and running in the country by the end of year.

F45 currently has two studios in London, one on Tottenham Court Road and the other in Kingston-Upon-Thames. At least another five will open in the next three months.

Of the 50 franchises sold in the UK, 35 will be in London and there will also be a presence in Brighton, Bournemouth, Birmingham and Manchester.

England Rugby player James Haskell is planning to open a studio in Richmond, London, followed by another in the Midlands.

Rob Deutsch, who founded F45 in 2012, told *Health Club*

Management that the growth in the UK is consistent with the company's aggressive expansion plans worldwide. It has sold 420 franchises globally in the past year taking its tally to 800. Approximately half of these are open.

F45 has a presence in 24 countries including in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India, Mexico, Philippines, Qatar, South Africa and US.

Classes are 45-minute high-intensity circuit training workouts in studios that are on average 200-250sq m (2,150-2,690sq ft).

Deutsch said: "Sessions are fast-paced with a strong community element to ensure users work to their maximum with constant support and guidance".

More: http://lei.sr?a=U3Y8r_H



F45 clubs offer high-intensity interval training



Virgin will still sell 14 of its clubs to David Lloyd

Virgin Active to keep two clubs following competition enquiry

Two of the 16 health clubs that David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) intended to acquire from Virgin Active will now not be included in the deal, after concerns were raised by a competition watchdog.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) said that DLL must "resolve concerns" relating to Virgin clubs in Brighton and Clearview, Essex, in order to avoid an in-depth phase two investigation.

To avoid the in-depth investigation, DLL will leave the two clubs in Virgin Active's ownership, while pushing to finalise a deal for the other 14 sites.

Virgin Active said it was "delighted" to be keeping the two properties in its ownership.

DLL's acquisition of the Virgin Active clubs will bring the number of sites in the DLL portfolio to 109.

http://lei.sr?a=w2H6e_H

Everyone Active lands Slough Borough Council contract

Sports and Leisure Management (SLM), which trades as Everyone Active, has won a 10-year contract to run leisure services in Slough after being named the preferred bidder by the town's borough council.

The sports and leisure operator took on the management of Montem Leisure Centre on 1 June 2017. Once construction and refurbishment works are complete, Everyone Active will also take over management of the Slough Ice Arena, Salt



Slough Ice Arena

Hill family activity centre and Langley Leisure Centre.

A new centre is expected to replace the existing Montem site in 2019.

More: http://lei.sr?a=B8V3d_H

Healthy obesity a myth, study concludes



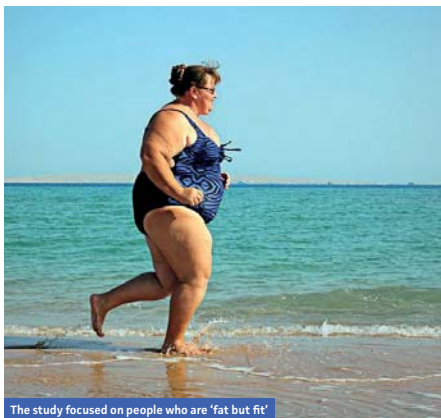
Dr Rishi Caleyachetty

Metabolically healthy obese individuals are at higher risk of coronary heart disease

Health experts have debunked the idea that people can be overweight but medically fit, according to a study that was presented at the European Congress on Obesity.

The research found that 'healthy' obese people are still at a higher risk of cardiovascular disease such as heart failure or stroke than people of normal weight.

The study, which was conducted by Dr Rishi Caleyachetty and colleagues at the University of Birmingham, UK, was presented at the congress in Porto, Portugal, on 17-20 May.



The study focused on people who are 'fat but fit'

People with metabolically healthy obesity (MHO) – known as "fat but fit" – are clinically obese in terms of their body mass index (BMI), but do not have metabolic complications, such as high blood pressure.

The authors found that individuals with MHO had a 50 per cent higher risk of coronary heart disease than individuals with normal weight.

More: http://lei.sr?a=J8S9y_H

Half of fitness workers see 'no opportunity' for development



64 per cent of fitness and sport professionals said their work did not involve any physical activity

More than half of people working in the sport, leisure and fitness industry feel as though they have no opportunity for professional development, according to a study conducted by Public Health England.

The research, conducted by the governmental body in collaboration with Dr Amit Mistry, revealed that 56 per cent of professionals felt that they weren't in a position to further their careers. A substantial number of the 800+ workers who took part in the survey (44 per cent) earned less than £20,000 per year.

Unveiling a snapshot of the report that is due to be released to the public shortly, Dr Mistry told delegates at the Elevate Exhibition in London that as a result

**“
Fitness staff had experienced more discrimination than NHS workers**

Dr Amit Mistry

people working in the industry had lower perceived wellbeing than the average population.

Dr Mistry also said that survey participants had experienced more discrimination and bullying than NHS workers.

Justin Varney, national lead for adult health, oversaw the piece of work with Dr Mistry after it emerged that sport was the sector with the third highest suicide rate in the UK.

More: http://lei.sr?a=U6A8K_H

Nuffield Health introduces health assessments



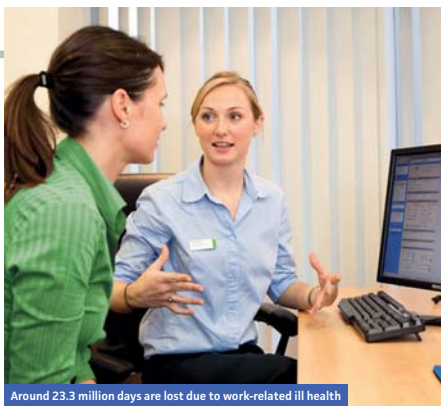
Our bespoke health assessment options will help businesses deliver workplace wellbeing

Jay Brewer

Nuffield Health has launched a series of bespoke health assessments for UK businesses as it looks to help tackle work-related illness.

Four personalised health assessment modules have been developed for employees following research by the not-for-profit healthcare organisation into current and future trends.

More than 2,000 participants were surveyed and the top three health concerns were being overweight, fitness and emotional wellbeing, with stress and depression



Around 23.3 million days are lost due to work-related ill health

stated as the two key factors.

Weight management, fitness and building resilience are three of the modules to be introduced.

Jay Brewer, Nuffield's head of clinical wellbeing, said: "Our bespoke health

assessments will help businesses deliver the next generation of workplace wellbeing, offering employees the chance to truly personalise their health evaluations."

More: http://lei.sr?a=3c6u3_H

Consumer spending on sport and fitness up – for now



Millennials have expressed their intention of moving their leisure spend away from fitness

The gym sector may have to brace itself for a drop in millennial members

Consumer spending on gym use and sporting activity increased during the first quarter of 2017, although analysts are predicting a dip in expenditure on general leisure activities due to a "weak pound" and "slowdown" in wage growth.

Deloitte's quarterly survey of 3,000 adults revealed that net spending on using fitness clubs and taking part in sport increased by two percentage points on Q4 2016 – although this is common for the period immediately after Christmas.

However, the gym sector may have to brace itself for

a drop in millennial members and customers, with some 18-34 year-olds shifting their leisure intentions elsewhere.

According to Deloitte there has been a seven percentage point dip in those intending to spend leisure money at the gym, with an increase in those wanting to eat out and go to pubs and bars.

The picture looks slightly bleaker across the entire leisure industry, with the effect of Brexit on the pound, rising inflation and slow nominal wage growth contributing to a fall in spending.

More: http://lei.sr?a=H5f5v_H

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 **Physical**

Connected gym market set for rapid growth

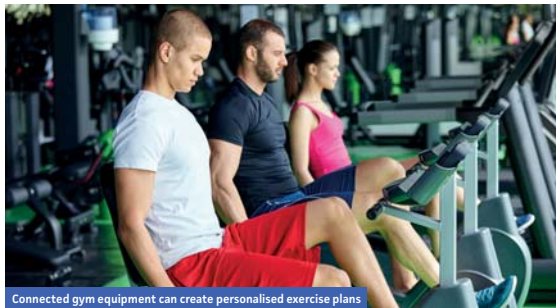
The global connected gym equipment market is set to grow at an annual rate of 45 per cent between 2017 and 2021.

The figure comes from the Global Connected Gym Equipment Market 2017-2021 report, published by analyst Research and Markets.

According to the report, customer demand is driving many equipment companies to collaborate with technology companies and integrate smart features into their equipment.

"Consumers prefer smart-connectivity gym equipment that monitors the workouts," the report states.

"Most connected gym equipment manufacturing companies are collaborating with technology companies for developing app-based gym



Connected gym equipment can create personalised exercise plans

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

equipment." According to the report, another driver in the market will be value-added features in equipment resulting in premium pricing of connected devices.

It cites Technogym's recent app compatibility

deal with Mapmyfitness and Runkeeper – which allows users to experience connectivity between apps and Technogym equipment – as an example of the trend.

Connected gym equipment is able to link to the internet

and tap into cloud-based data, such as workout goals, health history and nutritional habits to create personalised exercise plans and track how you're doing in the gym.

More: http://lei.sr?a=F8M8p_H

Basic-Fit and TomTom join forces to improve insight



Lars Guns, TomTom

Low-cost European fitness operator Basic-Fit has teamed up with TomTom in a deal that will see personal trainers use wearables to help provide gym members better physical activity advice.

The project is being piloted in gyms in the Netherlands and Belgium, and Basic-Fit members will be able to get insight into their performances via a new TomTom Sports app.

The collaboration is part of TomTom's 'Get Going' campaign, which encourages people to become and remain active.

**“
Together we can help
members achieve
an active lifestyle**

Lars Guns

Marcel Boots, Basic-Fit's innovation and corporate development director, said: "Basic-Fit believes in the power of collaboration. The sport wearables from TomTom can help our personal trainers provide members with broader advice around the areas of fitness, including

outside the gym. Using our expertise, we can keep them engaged and motivated."

Lars Guns, vice-president for sales and marketing Benelux at TomTom, said: "I'm really pleased with the cooperation between TomTom and Basic-Fit, because together we can help members achieve an active lifestyle. We want to help Basic-Fit members reach their goals, no matter how ambitious or modest they may be."

More: http://lei.sr?a=n8D6a_H



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DW Group appoints Martin Long as new CEO



Martin Long

The DW Group has appointed Martin Long as its chief executive officer.

Long led the acquisition of Fitness First UK for the DW Group in September 2016 before his official appointment. With the Fitness First brand

added to its portfolio, DW is the second largest operator of gyms in the UK with 126 clubs. It also has 90 sports retail sites in the country.

Long has extensive experience in both the fitness and retail sectors, spending eight years as chief executive of LA Fitness. Before that he was chief executive of Game Group, a video game retailer, which grew to more than 800 stores in nine countries during his 13 years with the business.

Martin Seibold left his role as MD in May.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Z8b5J_H

Matrix Fitness UK appoints new managing director



Matthew Pengelly

Matrix Fitness UK has named Matthew Pengelly as its new managing director.

Pengelly, who has 23 years of experience in the fitness industry, will replace Jon Johnston who is stepping down after serving almost 10 years in the role.

Pengelly began his fitness career with Holmes Place,

a premium health, fitness and wellness brand. He moved to Star Trac UK in 2004 where he held various roles. For the past four years, Pengelly has served as the senior vice president at Performance Health Systems.

On his appointment at Matrix, Pengelly said: "Matrix Fitness is really helping to shape the future of the fitness industry. I'm honoured and excited to join this team."

Pengelly will begin his role on 7 June, with Johnston staying on during a transition period until September.

More: <http://lei.sr?a=s5f4q>

Link4Life searches for new boss after Bishop steps down

The chief executive officer of Link4Life, the Trust that operates leisure services on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council, has decided to leave after almost four years in post.

Gillian Bishop joined the Trust in September 2013 as interim chief executive before taking on the role permanently in April 2015. She will leave the Trust at the end of August to become chief executive at North West Employers.

Roger Platt, chair of the board of trustees at Link4Life, said: "I want to pay tribute to the work that Gillian and the team have done for the organisation over this period,



Bishop first joined in 2013

and for the wider positive impact she has had in the borough and beyond.

"I have no doubt that she will continue to make a valuable contribution to the region. The board and staff are indebted to her."

More: http://lei.sr?a=n25V_H

Steven Ward steps up as ukactive chief executive

ukactive has promoted its executive director Steven Ward to the position of CEO.

The appointment comes two years after the departure of former CEO David Stalker – a move that saw Ward take up the role of executive director to help drive the not-for-profit body forward.

Ward said he had greatly enjoyed his past two years as executive director, during which he has worked with the team to build on the legacy of his predecessor.

He added: "Members are our bedrock and our focus will always be delivering against their commercial agenda."



Our members are the bedrock of ukactive and our focus will always be delivering against their core commercial agenda

Steven Ward

More: http://lei.sr?a=6n8v6_H

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active-net enjoys the support of the sector, thank you to:



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Events calendar

JUNE

25-27 | EuropeActive Executive Leadership Forum, Fairmont Hotel, Monaco, France

This event in Monaco will bring together leading industry players from across Europe. Participants will share business visions and best practice, while also being involved in interactive physical activities.

Experts from the health and fitness market will present the latest market information, trends and opportunities. Presenters from top tier organisations within the hotel, car and aviation industries will also be there to share their experience.

Details: www.europeactive.eu/events/ELF2017



Olympian Dame Kelly Holmes at last year's Flame Conference

CHARITY CHALLENGES

1 October 2017 Diabetes UK London Bridges Challenge

Join Diabetes UK for a 10-mile challenge that will allow walkers to enjoy the best views of London.

Start in beautiful Battersea Park, pass Big Ben and the London Eye, catch a glimpse of St Paul's, pass

Shakespeare's Globe theatre and finish the walk by crossing Tower Bridge.

At just £5 to enter, no minimum sponsorship and under 16s free – this is a challenge for all the family to enjoy. Find out more www.timeoutdoors.com



12-16 October 2017 Saharan Challenge, Morocco

The UNESCO World Heritage Draa Valley provides a dramatic backdrop for the Saharan Challenge – a five day adventure with two days of tough marathon distance walking, jogging or running and a night under the stars.

Registration is £200 and participants can fundraise for a charity of their choice, with a target of £950. Self-funded options start from £675, with meals, equipment and accommodation. Details: www.ultraadventure.com

27-28 | ukactive Ignite and Flame Conference Telford International Centre, Telford, UK

An insight and development event for junior and mid-level managers to learn, network and celebrate. The event features a range of motivational and educational speakers.

Details: www.ukactive.com

JULY

19-23 | IDEA World Fitness Convention Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nevada, US

Claimed to be the world's longest-running international fitness convention, with educational sessions from leaders.

Details: www.ideafit.com

AUGUST

31 August – 2 September | IHRSA Fitness Brasil Latin American Conference & Show Transamerica Expo Center, São Paulo, Brazil

The 18th IHRSA/Fitness Brasil programme is designed for owners and managers of all types and sizes of clubs.

Details: www.ihrsa.org/fitness-brasil

NIKOLAY PRYANISHNIKOV

The CEO of Russian fitness operator World Class talks to **Kate Cracknell** about its Moscow stronghold, 50 per cent PT revenues, and new boutique and low-cost ventures

When, and why, did you join World Class?

I joined World Class in September 2015 – from a background in telecommunications and IT – when I was headhunted on behalf of Russian Fitness Group, which owns the World Class health club chain.

I've always loved managing people and I was drawn to the energy of the fitness sector. It's such a fantastic industry – we help people become healthier, more successful, with improved physical appearance and self-esteem. It's hard to think of a better job.

Can you give us an overview of the World Class business?

World Class has been operating in Russia for 24 years and currently has 82 clubs: 74 in Russia, five in Kazakhstan and one each in Kyrgyzstan, Belarus and Monaco. We're also finalising the details for a club in Dubai, and we're looking at opening clubs in Georgia. We focus on areas where there are already a lot of Russian speakers.

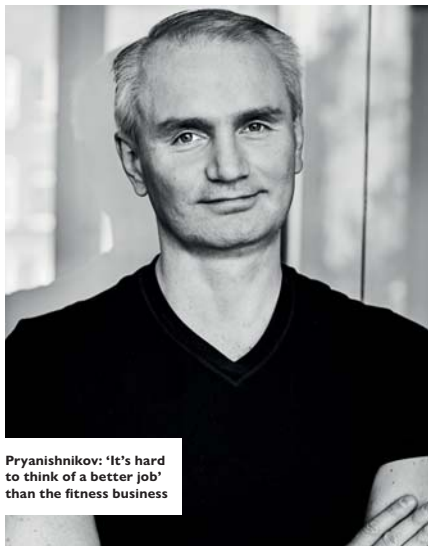
The majority of our clubs are large, premium, full-service facilities. They all have big gyms – up to – plus group exercise studios and functional training zones. Most have a large swimming pool and spa, and many also have a kids' area.

In fact, we have various different club models operating under the World Class brand – luxury, premium, business – but they're all high-end if you benchmark them against clubs in other markets around the world. Membership is on average US\$1,000 a year.

We also have four boutique studios in Moscow: Mind & Body Studio by World Class opened in the centre of the city in February 2017, and we also have our Dance Studio. In addition, we have boutique Cycle and HIIT studios within our new club in the Metropolis shopping mall. We'll open more boutique sites if these go well. Half of our clubs are corporately owned; the other half are franchised.

What are the USPs of World Class versus the competition?

Perhaps our most valuable asset, having been in the market for a long time, is the extensive experience embodied in our team – experience in operating health clubs, but also in attracting, developing and retaining the very best staff. In line with this, we have a new development programme, launched a year ago, where we're training 40 great managers of the future.



Pryanishnikov: 'It's hard to think of a better job' than the fitness business

We also place a lot of emphasis on building an aspirational community. Our members are young, healthy, successful – and others want to be part of it.

Customer service is also key for us – finding ways to become closer to our members. We recently reclassified reception as a 'service desk', and in the process, we redefined the role of the staff working on that desk. They're now empowered to help members with anything they need. Initiatives such as this have had a huge impact on attrition, which has dropped from 30 per cent to 22 per cent across the company since I came on-board.

Technology has also been incorporated into this customer service strategy. For example, there's an



We reclassified reception as a 'service desk', empowering staff to help members with anything they need. It's had a huge impact on attrition

automated system to handle all customer feedback within 24 hours – and this is tracked and worked into the staff commission structure.

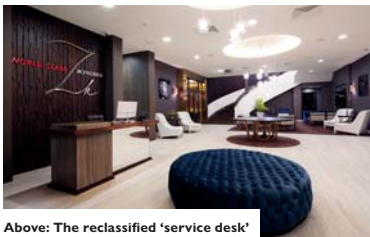
I also lead by example here: I have over 10,000 social media followers, many of whom are customers of World Class, so it's easy for them to find me and give feedback. I try to have a very open relationship with customers and this is rubbing off on club managers, which is great.

World Class' PT offering is particularly successful. Why is this?

At World Class, personal training generates 50 per cent of what we make from membership fees, based on an average PT fee of US\$50 an hour. You might find one-off, independent gyms that achieve this, but you'd typically expect chains to make no more than 15 or 20 per cent. I don't know anyone who's making 50 per cent – certainly not across such a big chain.

That isn't profit of course: we need to pay the trainer and pay taxes. But still, in terms of revenues and added value and additional profitability, it's a fantastic business.

We've worked hard to get to this position, putting a number of strategies in place. First of all, you have to get the right people onboard: from 3,000 CVs, we interviewed 1,000 trainers and recruited 300. We only take the best. We then invest heavily in education and development, including mentorship. ►



Above: The reclassified 'service desk'

Below: World Class clubs are large, full-service premium offerings





The company plans to expand from 30 to 40 clubs in Moscow in the next five years

PT commission ranges from 15 to 45 per cent depending on their performance. It encourages them to become rockstar PTs

Nikolay Pryanishnikov

There's also an incentive scheme that encourages PTs to work hard and be as good as they can be, with commission ranging from 15 to 45 per cent depending on how well they're performing. That means we end up with a lot of rockstar trainers.

Our marketing also helps push members towards personal training. We run lots of competitions, for example: running, swimming, weight lifting and so on, and members turn to our PTs to help them prepare.

We also have our top instructors and PTs present at the World Class Convention, as well as acting as spokespeople for our brand on social media. This not only attracts other good PTs to work with us, but also builds member awareness of our superstar PTs, and awareness of our clubs among non-members.

What are your plans for business growth?

I've set out three key pillars for growth. The first is to maintain market leader position in the premium sector in Moscow. We already have 30 clubs in the city; no other operator comes close, and I don't want to give anyone the chance to. I want to grow our Moscow estate to 40 clubs over the next five years.

That's the real focus with our corporately owned clubs: reinforcing our market dominance in the main cities of Russia. In addition to Moscow, we have five clubs in St Petersburg, and the clubs in Ekaterinburg are also corporately owned.

The second pillar is franchising, which is an aspect of the business I'm very keen to grow. We have around 40

franchised sites at the moment, and I want to grow that to 150 or even 200 over the next five years.

We have the rights to the World Class brand across the whole of Russia, as well as the markets of the CIS [the Commonwealth of Independent States, formed after the break-up of the USSR]. There are 145 million people in Russia and 130 million people across the CIS. That's a huge opportunity, but it's too geographically widespread for us to effectively manage clubs directly. We just wouldn't be able to see all the managers regularly enough.

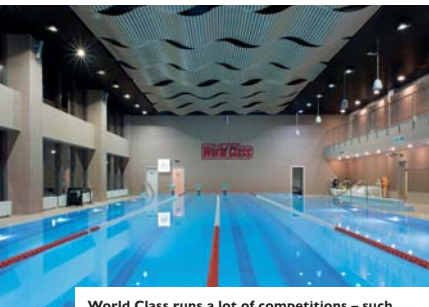
So outside of the main cities of Russia, we'll franchise. I also foresee additional opportunities like the Monaco club. Monaco is a franchise, but we manage it on behalf of the investor.

We'll also look at other non-Russian speaking countries. We have the rights to a number of western European markets including the UK, Germany and France, for example. But we aren't in a hurry. We'll move carefully, and still aren't decided if we'll franchise or open our own clubs.

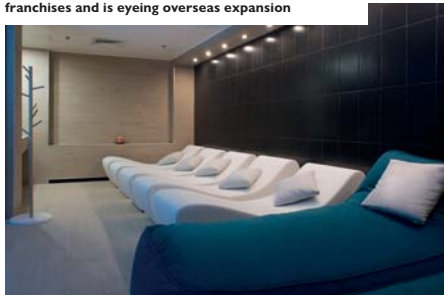
Thirdly, we'll look to diversify. There are clearly two big trends at the moment – boutique and low-cost – and we want to get involved. We're piloting a boutique concept as I say, although I'm not overly optimistic about that model. It would allow us to build smaller clubs in the gaps between our larger clubs, helping us further assert Moscow dominance, but at this stage I can't see how we'll make serious money out of it. I don't think many boutiques are really making much money, and it



As well as dominating in the Russian high-end market, World Class is also focused on growing its franchises and is eyeing overseas expansion



World Class runs a lot of competitions – such as swimming, running and weight-lifting – which help push members towards its PT services



We're piloting a boutique concept, but I can't see how we'll make serious money out of it. I don't think many boutiques are really making much money

Nikolay Pryanishnikov

will be even harder to do so in Russia because working practices mean off-peak hours will be empty.

We'll also be exploring the low-cost segment, either on our own or in partnership. I'd like to make some progress on that in the next year. We already have some budget clubs operating under the Fitzkult brand, as franchises, but I want to create a true low-cost brand.

In addition, although this isn't one of the three pillars, I believe that we can generate 10 per cent more business in our existing clubs – whether that's 10 per cent more revenue from new members joining, or 10 per cent more revenue from our existing members – simply by constantly innovating and experimenting to keep energy levels high in the clubs.

Where are the market opportunities generally in Russia?

I believe there's still room for more premium clubs, provided you select the right locations.

The economy isn't great in Russia at the moment, and people are looking to save money, but the very premium end of the market doesn't seem to be affected by this: our top-end clubs are still growing.

In the last year, we've boosted revenues by 9.1 per cent and EBITDA by 18 per cent, and our 100,000 members are proving to be very sustainable, loyal

customers. We signed up over 2,000 members in pre-sale for our latest club, for example, which opened in February this year. I believe we're very lucky to be working in the premium segment.

The low-cost fitness club segment – operators such as Alex Fitness [see *HCM* May 17, p42] – also has the potential to boom. However, it isn't easy to adapt this model to Russia where, for example, not everyone is yet ready to do everything online. You always need some staff in the clubs.

And I think there's still space for mid-market operators too, because going to the gym is becoming more popular across all segments of society.

Zebra Fitness Clubs are a good example: they have a pool but they're cheaper, and they're attracting the older generations who have always turned to swimming for their exercise. Quite a lot of kids are buying memberships for their parents so they can go swimming.

But there are also challenges in Russia. The market is dominated by independents – they make up around 80 per cent of the market – and these are often businesses where someone with a lot of money has been happy to invest without seeing a solid business plan.

In the end, the clubs have to lower their prices to survive – and that affects us, as well as damaging the credibility of the sector as a whole. ●



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VERY QUICKLY FLIP OVER TO A FULL MEMBERSHIP”**

Marie Leather
Sport and Leisure Manager at
Salford Community Leisure Limited

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Is AI scary science, or a way to improve customer service and workout results?

Kath Hudson talk to those in the know about the potential of this emerging technology



Cameron Brooks
European Director for Watson
in the public sector: IBM

At IBM we prefer the term augmented intelligence to artificial intelligence. We are not wanting to replicate human behaviour, but aiming to augment and advise, so the machine learns while it is being supervised by humans, and in turn can keep improving its knowledge to give better advice.

This technology is already being used to good effect in the healthcare industry. Our AI tool, Watson, has trawled through thousands of journals

and medical records and so can recommend treatments for doctors to use. It's a collaboration between man and machine – if the doctor wishes to revise the recommendation, then Watson learns and takes it into account next time.

Now we're working with Under Armour to create an app that will act as personal health consultant and trainer, by providing users with evidence-based coaching around sleep, activity and nutrition, comparing the user to people like them.

We're also working with Arthritis Research UK, so people with the condition will be able to get access to personalised information in a way that feels like a natural conversation. Currently being tested, it will be available later in the year on the charity's website and will help millions of people.

In the health and fitness sector, data could be taken from wearables, which




IBM Watson-enabled AI robots help the elderly – will AI PTs be next?

is being generated every day. So we could create a tool that asks questions of the individual and combines this with the knowledge aggregated from lots of other users to give them a programme that is specific to them.

Augmented intelligence would allow gym operators to give better, more personalised advice to their clients, which could lead to better results and retention. We welcome collaboration with industry professionals in order to build the most effective and helpful tools.

Read more online
<http://lei.sr?a=x9C5u>

IBM is working with Under Armour to create an app which will act as personal health consultant and trainer, by providing users with evidence-based coaching around sleep, fitness activity and nutrition – **Cameron Brooks, IBM**



Vi, a AI-enabled
'personal trainer',
is delivered via bio-
sensing earphones



Cliff Chen

Founder: Locus New Media

We launched our AI personal trainer, Vi, in June. Vi lives in bio-sensing ear phones and delivers training advice.

It's very exciting, but we're still only at the beginning of the journey. To start with, we've focused on fine-tuning our running coaching module, but we're looking forward to activating more features, for example the ability to sense elevation and the addition of more sports.

Going forward, we're exploring interfaces with other network-ready devices, for instance syncing with exercise machines to get data and to track repetitions when doing weights. Also, we want it to be able to give meaningful advice outside the

We don't see AI as threatening jobs in the fitness industry - there's no replacement for a human who can watch form and adjust in real time – Cliff Chen, creator of Vi

workout, for example reporting on rest and recovery.

We've aimed to create the sense of presence of a human being, so Vi will become a workout buddy, who will push you to new limits or hold you accountable for a missed workout.

The tech angle could act as a compelling hook to an audience that is out of touch with body and activity. Equally, those who are already active could be coached to shave minutes off their 10k time. AI is a great tool to accomplish that because of the real-time vocal feedback.

Some people think of AI as a scary threat. This could be the case in some fields, such as self driving cars, but we don't see it as threatening jobs in the fitness industry – there's no replacement for a human who can watch form and adjust

in real time. In fact, we see Vi as a way human trainers can keep track of their clients' activities between sessions.

We'd love to partner with the industry and adapt the product, so that it's better for everyone to make their workout even more rich and enjoyable.

 **Read more online**
www.getvi.com





► **David Minton**
 Founder: The Leisure
 Database Company

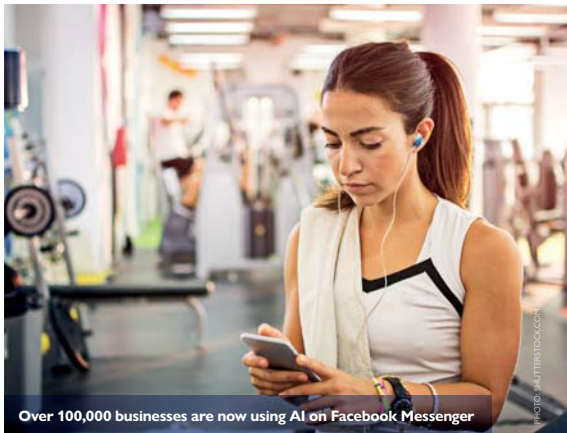
The fitness industry needs to embrace AI and be open to the opportunity it represents – by making things easier for the consumer it does have the potential to increase participation.

Operators need to look at how other industries are using AI – like fashion, food and restaurants. More than 100,000 businesses are currently using AI on Facebook Messenger, using chatbots to reply to questions from customers. The more they're used, the more they learn and the more effective they become.

There's also the opportunity to feed into other eco systems with live timetables. For example, if people are talking on social media about going to a spinning class, a bot from the gym could pop up to encourage them to book in. If they take part in the class, the following week it will remind them again. In short, it will communicate with customers a lot more than operators do now!

► **Read more online**
www.leisuredb.com/

“ If people are talking on social media about going to a class, a bot from the gym could pop up to encourage them to book. In short, it will communicate with customers a lot more than operators do now! – **David Minton, LeisureDB**



Over 100,000 businesses are now using AI on Facebook Messenger

“ Chatbots simulate personalised human interactions, and solutions...Imagine responding to client enquiries or sharing information proactively, without having to be directly involved – **Bryan K O'Rourke, Vedere Ventures**



Bryan K. O'Rourke
 President and principal in Vedere
 Ventures: Fitness Industry
 Technology Council

Given that more than half of all customers will switch brands by 2020 if a company doesn't anticipate their needs, AI is a tool many should embrace. Often a misapplied term, AI is simply a set of technology tools that can enhance business processes. Adopting AI is no different to making a switch from paper processes to email.

Within the fitness industry, AI has the potential to enhance efficiency, improve revenues and grow a more loyal customer base. For example, chatbots

are being deployed with several fitness specific solutions coming to market. Chatbots simulate personalised human interactions, and solutions like <https://chatfuel.com> even let you create these bots without any coding experience.

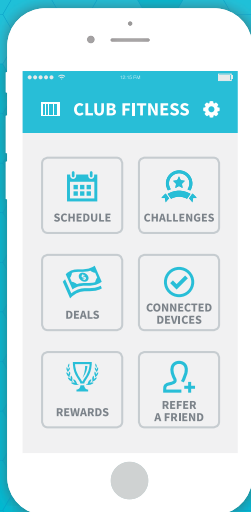
AI could also be deployed to enhance CRM to improve revenues. For example, sales technology could work out the deals you're working on by your calendar, email and phone interactions. AI-enhanced CRM automatically builds and monitors your pipeline, so you can focus on closing more deals.

AI could also help to grow a loyal membership base, by segmenting audiences and customising their journey, so customers receive the right offer at the right time, based on their preferences. With IBM's Watson, Under Armour combines user data from its Record app with third-party data and research on fitness and nutrition. The result is the ability for the brand to offer up personalised training and lifecycle advice based on aggregated wisdom. ●

► **Read more online**
<http://www.fittechcouncil.org/>

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GROWTH CURVE

Who are the biggest, most profitable fitness operators in Europe, and which countries have the most growth potential? Deloitte's Karsten Hollasch reveals all



While some people might associate the number 80 million with the population of Germany or the annual

earnings of football star Cristiano Ronaldo, the European health and fitness association, EuropeActive, adopted the figure in 2014, to set a goal for the industry to attain 80 million members by 2025.

Three years later, the industry remains on track to reach this target, as total membership in the EU, Norway, Russia, Switzerland and Turkey rose by 4.4 per cent to 56.4 million at the end of 2016, according to the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2017* – produced by Deloitte in partnership with EuropeActive.

GLOBAL DOMINATION

Europe continues to be the world's largest health and fitness market, with

Europe remains the world's largest health and fitness market

€26.3bn total revenues in 2016

total revenues of €26.3bn in 2016, ahead of the USA at €23.3bn in 2015, according to the IHRSA *Global Report*.

Market size increased by 3.1 per cent in 2016 over 2015 at constant foreign currency exchange rates, with

Switzerland at +5.8 per cent, Germany +4.6 per cent, Finland +4.0 per cent, Sweden +3.9 per cent and Turkey at +3.4 per cent, showing the highest revenue growth rates.

At actual foreign currency exchange rates, year-on-year growth in euros amounted to -0.5per cent due to disruptions in exchange rate effects, most notably in the UK (-11.1per cent), Turkey (-9.9per cent) and Russia (-9.0per cent), for well documented reasons.

IMPACT OF LOW COST FITNESS SECTOR

As in 2015, the low-cost segment was again one of the fastest growing segments in 2016, resulting in a decrease in average monthly membership fees in the European health and fitness market of 1.3 per cent at constant foreign currency exchange rates.

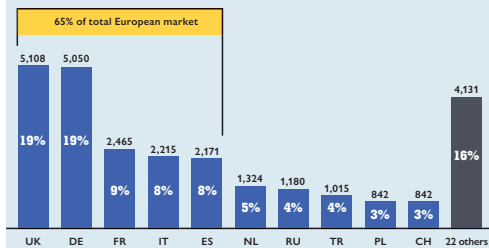
The more mature Northern and Western European markets also continue to see an increasing number of boutique fitness clubs opening.

MAIN FINDINGS

Karsten Hollasch, partner at Deloitte and head of Deloitte's German Sports Business Group, says the major operators continue to be the drivers of growth: "The 30 largest operators had more than 12.7 million members at the end of 2016 – an increase of 15.5 per cent over the previous year's top 30.

"While low cost operators continue to generate the highest organic growth" he continued, "premium and upper mid-market operators like Migros Group, Nuffield Health and DW Sports have made major acquisitions. This underlines

TOP EUROPEAN MARKETS BY REVENUE



Sources: EuropeActive, Deloitte



McFIT remains the leading German low cost operator with 241 clubs. It also operates 14 clubs under the HIGH5 brand

not only continued market consolidation, but also increasing polarisation between the low cost sector on one side and boutique and premium operators on the other."

The leading European operator in terms of membership remains German low cost chain McFIT Group, with an estimated 1.5 million members – an increase of 130,000 over the previous year.

While the total number of McFIT-branded clubs increased by four from 237 to 241, the group also operated 14 clubs under the High5 brand and introduced the new John Reed brand in 2016, which had grown to six clubs at the end of the year.

John Reed follows the slogan 'Not your average gym' and combines elements of a classic McFIT gym with unconventional interior design and a strong focus on music at monthly membership fees of €20 to €35. McFIT plans to expand the new concept further across Germany and Europe in 2017, including opening a club in Budapest, Hungary. For more insights into the McFIT brands, see *HCM April 2017*, page 42).

Ranking second is the Netherlands-based, low-cost chain Basic-Fit, which has 1.21 million members. Basic-Fit generated the highest organic membership growth of all operators in 2016, with 254,000 more members joining up. British low-cost operator Pure Gym ranks third and increased its membership by 150,000 to 820,000 in 2016.

"The 30 largest operators had more than 12.7 million members at the end of 2016 – an increase of 15.5 per cent over the previous year"

Karsten Hollasch



On the funding front, Pure Gym had to call off a planned IPO due to unfavourable capital market conditions last year, while Basic-Fit made an initial public offering at the Euronext Amsterdam in June 2016, placing 26.7 million shares.

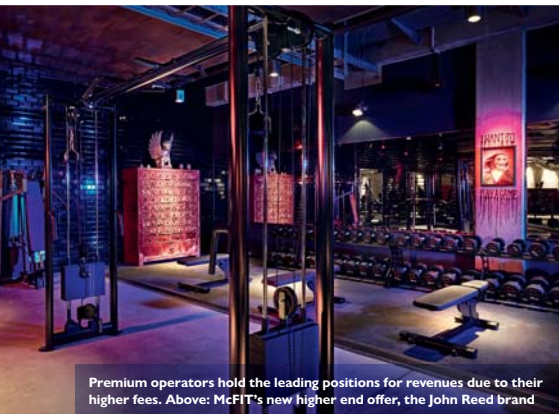
GROWTH BY ACQUISITION

A number of premium and upper mid-market operators completed major buyouts in 2016. In January 2016, Swiss retailer Migros Group took over full ownership of INLINE GmbH, the parent company of the German-based fitness franchise INJOY. The addition of INJOY, combined with the further expansion of its Swiss core business, led to an increase in membership for Migros from 256,000 to an estimated 451,000. This put the company eighth in the European ranking in terms of membership numbers.

In June 2016, Nuffield Health announced the acquisition of 35 clubs from Virgin Active. With 322,000 members – an increase of 109,000 over the previous year – Nuffield Health ranked as the largest not-for-profit operator in the UK at the end of 2016 as a result. In addition, British mid-market brand DW Sports executed one of the largest transactions in 2016, with the acquisition of Fitness First UK from its owners Oaktree Capital and Marathon Asset Management. The deal, which was finalised in September, included 62 clubs, of which 58 remained with DW Sports at the end of 2016, increasing DW's total membership to 375,000 (+127,000).

REVENUE LEADER

Despite the sale of 35 clubs to Nuffield Health and the negative exchange rate ▶



Premium operators hold the leading positions for revenues due to their higher fees. Above: McFIT's new higher end offer, the John Reed brand



GRAPHICS SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

...it was another year of strong growth for the global commercial fitness equipment industry, which has an estimated market size of

€2.76bn

- impact of trading in Sterling and Euros, Virgin Active retained its leading position in the European revenue ranking, with income of €499m in 2016. At the end of 2016, Virgin Active had 60 clubs in the UK, 33 in Italy, eight in Spain and four in Portugal, making a total of 115.

Second in Europe in terms of revenues is fellow UK-based operator David Lloyd Leisure at €442m, followed by the Migros Group at €366m and Scandinavian market leader Health & Fitness Nordic at €337m. Due to its acquisitions, Nuffield Health solidified its spot at sixth place in the revenue ranking at €261m, while DW Sports moved into ninth place with €188m and Russian-based premium operator Russian Fitness Group rounded out the group at €157m.

While premium operators continue to hold the leading positions in terms of revenues due to their higher membership

fees and secondary revenues, the European top 10 by revenue includes three low-cost operators, McFIT (€327m), Basic-Fit (€259m) and Pure Gym (€196m). This despite reporting average annual revenues per member of less than €240.

Overall, the top 10 operators increased their revenues by 19.8 per cent

at constant foreign currency exchange rates and 12.2 per cent in euros in 2016, underlining the trend towards greater market consolidation.

HOLDING ITS OWN

Health and fitness club operators remained attractive for investors in 2016

Virgin Active retained its Number 1 position in the European revenue ranking with income of

€499
million in 2016



By the end of 2016, Virgin Active had 115 clubs in Europe

The top five European fitness nations by membership

No.2 UK
9.3 million members and
€5.1 billion revenue

No.1 Germany
10 million members
and €5 billion in revenues

No.3 France
5.5 million members
and €2.5 billion revenue

No.5 Spain
5.1 million members
and €2.2 billion revenue

No.4 Italy
5.3 million members and
€2.2 billion revenue

and while the number of deals decreased slightly, from 19 transactions each in 2014 and 2015 to 17 transactions in 2016, this number can be considered positive against the background of market events, according to Hollasch: "Despite market uncertainty in the UK following the Brexit vote in June 2016, the number of mergers and acquisitions remained at a high level in 2016," he said "This underlines the continued attractiveness of the health and fitness sector for both

strategic and financial investors and has resulted in significant M&A activity in the first few months of 2017."

Activity was also strong on the market's supply side, as shown by Life Fitness' acquisition of Cybex in January 2016. Overall, it was another year of strong growth for the global commercial fitness equipment industry, which has an estimated market size of €2.76bn.

The six leading B2B fitness equipment manufacturers, Core Health & Fitness,

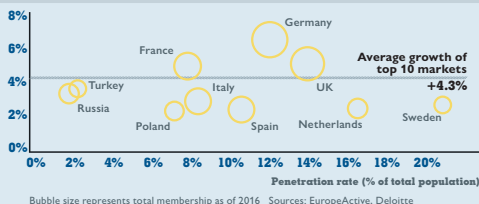
Johnson Health Tech, Life Fitness, Nautilus, Precor and Technogym – which together accounted for 79 per cent of the market in 2016 – achieved total net sales growth of 14.3 per cent in 2016. When excluding the effects of the acquisitions of Octane Fitness by Nautilus and Cybex by Life Fitness, year-on-year growth amounted to 5.4 per cent.

GERMANY: HISTORIC YEAR FOR FITNESS

The German health and fitness market had a significant year in 2016, bursting through the threshold of 10 million total members and €5bn in revenues for the very first time.

When combined, the top five European health and fitness nations – Germany, United Kingdom (9.3 million members and €5.1bn revenue), France (5.5 million members and €2.5bn revenue), Italy (5.3 million members and €2.2bn revenue) and Spain (5.1 million members and €2.2bn revenue) – represent nearly two thirds of the entire European market in terms of both membership numbers and revenues. ▶

TOP EUROPEAN MARKETS BY MEMBERSHIP GROWTH





Basic-Fit is in the top 10 for revenue, despite being a budget offer

- ▶ With penetration rates of between 8-14 per cent, the top five offer further growth potential and are expected to be major drivers towards the target of 80 million members by 2025.

HIGHEST AND LOWEST RATIOS IN EUROPE

Sweden at 21.1 per cent, Norway at 19.2 per cent and the Netherlands at 16.7 per cent have the highest ratio of health and fitness club members to the total population.

At the other end of the scale, Turkey at 2.4 per cent and Russia at 2.0 per cent have relatively low penetration rates, and, in combination with their large populations, show that there is potential for future growth.

GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR THE MARKET

Hollasch also expects new growth to come from unexpected places. "New concepts and business models are leading to structural changes in the fitness market," he says.

"The definition of the industry as a purely bricks and mortar investment is over: existing fitness concepts are being augmented by digital offerings and new market participants are developing entirely new purely digital concepts, while an increasing number of health and fitness enthusiasts who are

"2016 was another year of strong growth in memberships and revenues. The operators in our survey also indicated they expect good growth for 2017 and beyond"

Herman Rutgers



engaging in outdoor activities, such as bootcamps, for instance.

"Further growth in the market will be driven by macro-trends such as increasing levels of disposable income and physical activity," he continued. "But even more growth will come from improved fitness concepts that better meet customer preferences and offer transparency and flexibility."

The continued growth of specialised boutique concepts like CrossFit are expanding the market and creating new ways to be physically active.

While mobile apps, wearable tracking devices and online gyms have gained – and will continue to gain – popularity, digital technology is also a key element in the business model of fitness aggregators, which provide flexible pay-as-you-go gym access through their websites and mobile apps.

In launching the report, Herman Rutgers, board member at EuropeActive and co-author, said he is very optimistic: "2016 was another year of strong growth in membership numbers and revenues. The operators in our survey also indicated they expect good growth for 2017 and beyond.

"This shows that our products and services remain highly attractive to consumers across Europe and makes us confident we'll reach the industry goal of 80 million members by 2025." ●



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TRAINER DISCOVERS THE POWER OF EMS

As a personal trainer for 13 years, James Seilo has worked with all kinds of clients. Since adopting the miha bodytec system, he tells us how it's transformed his mobile PT business

Sometimes it takes a wake-up call to make successful people what they are. For sportsman James Seilo, it was the experience of turning 30 that led him towards his decision to make a career out of his passion and start a career in fitness as a self-employed personal trainer. After working as a qualified trainer for 13 years, Seilo has never looked back.

He started with GP referrals, taking deep-water aqua therapy classes for ladies over 60, who he describes as a "tough and incorrigible bunch". He went on to run a personal training studio, as well as outdoor bootcamps using giant orange space hoppers and swing balls. Today he is successfully running a mobile EMS business around Southampton and the surrounding areas of Hampshire.

How did you first get to know EMS training?

One of my clients asked me to look into EMS training as a very good friend of his had highly recommended it.

Trying the miha bodytec system for the first time I experienced a comfortable and time-saving workout that still had an intense effect, so I was initially convinced by the technology.

What were the main advantages you initially experienced?

At first I was sceptical about it as a replacement of a workout with weights. But the effect was actually quite similar to having performed heavy or weighted plyometric squats. Except all I needed was my body weight. There's no excessive loading so I realised that it's just perfect for clients with joint-related issues, of which there are quite a few.

As I said: There are no weights with the Miha system. For me, as a mobile personal trainer, this also means that I don't have to carry heavy equipment, which is a clear improvement to my business. That's one huge advantage.

The miha system
is totally portable,
so perfect for PTs



There's no excessive loading so I realised it's just perfect for clients with joint related issues – of which there are quite a few





Seilo has received a lot of positive feedback since offering EMS to his PT clients

“One client proudly reported his wife had complimented him on his bottom – comparing it to that of a twenty year old. He’s 73”

Now, when I travel to my customers I just bring the EMS device, which can be set up quickly to start the training. Also, the session is done after only twenty minutes, so it's a win-win.

How did your customers respond to this new mode of training?

Many clients tell me that they've noticed a real change in muscle tone and shape. They miss the training when on holiday and find it strangely addictive. But it really depends on the habits of my customers, their fitness level or specific health issues.

There are many stories to tell – let me give a few examples. One of my clients has a recurring achilles tendon problem. Ordinarily she would either have to stop sessions due to the pain or just do upper body work. With the EMS training we have been able to continue whole body training, while actually reducing the pain level in her achilles using the system's body relax mode.

Similarly, another client has a history of lumbar pain. He would have to visit his chiropractor once every two or three weeks for treatment. After we started, he hasn't been to see him for five months. One client proudly reported that his wife had complimented him on his bottom, comparing it to that of a twenty year old. He's 73.

How has your customer base changed since providing mobile EMS personal training?

Well, since implementing the system I've been able to engage with a market of clients previously out of reach; those intimidated by seeing a trainer, going to a gym and under time pressures. Most importantly, word of mouth spread quickly, so that within a few weeks I'd increased my client base significantly.

I also hear from many of my old clients that it had been quite an improvement.

Lastly a lady who has been with me for 10 years mentioned recently that these days, she looks forward to her sessions! I try not to take it personally.

Possibly the most surprising benefit has been gaining clients who already have a regular trainer, as they don't see it as being disloyal or a conflict of interest.

Without a doubt the EMS system has injected a new lease of life into my business and given me a unique advantage in a highly competitive PT market.

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DAVID LLOYD

The serial health club and sports entrepreneur speaks to **Steph Eaves** about creating a brand new adventure park concept and what he learned from his years in the health and fitness industry



When you talk to David Lloyd about his latest venture, you can have no doubt as to why

he's been so successful in business. At the first mention of his new adventure parks concept, Lloyd's face lights up, and it's clear that he's never lost his passion for turning ideas into reality. In fact, it's no wonder that his latest idea centres around play and adrenaline – it's obvious from his enthusiasm that his inner child is very much alive.

The man who created and then sold David Lloyd Leisure, a full service fitness and leisure offering with a focus on family, is now taking this same idea into his adventure parks – bringing together a wide variety of fun activities, food and leisure under one roof. Although to be more exact, over half of the offering will be roofless, as there's a huge outdoor component to the parks.

"We've got 24 different activities, indoor and outdoor, from climbing



Above: HIP marketing director David Dean

Below: HIP CEO Martin



walls to ninja warrior races, to zip lines, to gliders, to bouncy castles and mini golf," Lloyd enthuses.

"I'm very excited about it because I've got a young family, and at weekends you're always thinking, where the hell can I take my five year old? These parks are going to be 60,000sq foot indoor and about 1.5 acres outdoor, and it's a day out for the family – a whole day out – you can stay as long as you want."

FAMILY FUN

Lloyd came up with the concept while dabbling in trampoline parks. After coming across an indoor activity centre in Florida called Planet Air and looking back on what he had learned from his leisure clubs, he realised that the way forward was an all-inclusive offering, rather than a specialised one.

"I thought, trampolines are great, but it's going to change. My health clubs started as just tennis and that was the mistake I made. But now they have



Lloyd has always had faith in the family market – his eponymous fitness business has families at its heart

I believe in keeping things open plan – that's what changed health clubs and sport. If you see everything, then you want to try everything – *David Lloyd*

everything. We called them a sporting city under one roof. So this is an activity city under one roof."

Importantly to Lloyd, the parks will provide lots of opportunity for guests to see what's going on around them.

"I believe in keeping things open plan – that's what changed health clubs and sport, really," he says. "If you see someone at the club playing tennis, you think, 'oh, I must try that', whereas if there's a wall, you never see it. So if you see everything, then you want to try everything."

The adventure parks will also feature barbecue pits, where families can choose their own pre-marinated meat and cook it themselves. Lloyd believes this, plus the

huge variety of activities on offer will help kids to be healthier. "Everyone is getting obese these days," he says. "We have to make sure kids get the activity they need to stay healthy. And the way to get kids active is to make them enjoy it."

A big part of keeping up this enjoyment all year round, explains Lloyd, is the outdoor offering.

"Any indoor activity in Britain – like bowling or trampolines – dies in the summer, because as British people don't mind getting a little bit wet, and as soon as summer comes, we want to be outside. So having the outdoors with the barbecues and the zip lines, etc, is very important."

PASSION AND PEOPLE

Lloyd is confident that this new venture will be a success, and with good reason. In 1995, 13 years after he opened the first club, David Lloyd Leisure was sold for a reported £200m.

Lloyd says that he learned some important lessons from the years he spent building up the leisure clubs, particularly about the need to be adaptable.

"Whatever you do, you will make a mistake," he explains. "Maybe one or two, maybe three, but you will. Because although you believe you've done all your demographic profiling, you will get it wrong, and then you have to be brave ▶



David Lloyd playing at the Dewar Cup in London in November 1976

PHOTO: PRESS ASSOCIATION, SAGSAG, BARBATTIS/SPORTS

“I just think if you enjoy something and you believe in it, and you pick the right people, then nine times out of ten you’ll be successful – David Lloyd

- enough to change it quickly. If it’s wrong, it’s wrong – you’ve got to change, you’ve got to put something else in.”

Another thing that Lloyd believes has been key to his success is giving everyone involved a sense of ownership, through share options and a high level of responsibility. He says: “I told all my managers at David Lloyd Leisure – and

it will be the same at the new adventure parks – that this was their club. They know their customers better than me. I’m not going to dictate, as long as they stick to the margins I’ve given them.”

Above all else, says Lloyd, the key to success is simply to have a real passion for what you’re doing and to keep enjoying it.

“I just think if you enjoy something and you believe in it, and you pick the right people, then nine times out of 10 you’ll be successful. I love vision – seeing it and then making it happen.

“I’ve always been a great believer in family entertainment, I just think it’s so important. And we’re going to need it more and more in my opinion.” ●

DAVID LLOYD'S PATH THROUGH SPORT AND LEISURE

1965

Won both singles and doubles titles at Junior Wimbledon, aged 17

1981

Retired from professional tennis with a career high of 128 in world singles rankings

1982

Founded David Lloyd Leisure Clubs – family-orientated, with an emphasis on tennis

1992

David Lloyd Leisure floated on the London Stock Exchange

1995

Company acquired by Whitbread for £200m. David Lloyd appointed captain of the British Davis Cup team

1997

Created Next Generation Clubs with son Scott. Later acquired by London & Regional and Bank of Scotland, along with David Lloyd Leisure for £925m

2015

Launched Megajump trampoline parks with entrepreneur Mitchell Tillman

2017

Announced new adventure parks concept

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DAWN OF A GOLDEN AGE



The latest numbers from The Leisure Database Company show the market is growing strongly and anticipating a golden age between now and 2020. David Minton reports



The budget sector is driving growth.
Image courtesy of The Gym Group.



£4.7bn

Estimated total market value, UK

9.7m

Fitness members in the UK

6,728

Fitness facilities in the UK

1 in 7

Are members of a gym

Source: LeisureDB -
2017 State of the UK Fitness Industry

The number of gyms and members, the market value of the sector and penetration rates for memberships are the key metrics detailed in the 2017 *State of the UK Fitness Industry Report* published by LeisureDB and they all show the UK fitness industry to be in rude health.

There are now over 9.7m fitness members (an increase of 5.1 per cent from 2016), which has boosted the penetration rate to an all-time high of 14.9 per cent, compared to 14.3 per cent 12 months ago. The market value has continued to grow and is now estimated to be £4.7bn, a 6.3 per cent increase. Now, in the UK, 1 in every 7 people are members of a gym – the most ever.

BUDGET SUCCESS

The low-cost market has continued to be the main driving force of the industry. With over 500 sites, they now account for 15 per cent of the market value and an impressive 35 per cent of membership across the private sector.

Some trusts, management contractors and in-house operators across the public sector are also operating low-cost gyms and many of the low-cost brands have discovered that the strength of the market in some areas enables them to raise and move into the mid-market.

Fitness brands, with transparency of pricing and offering, are continuing to grow and by utilising good social media practices and constantly listening and responding to their customers, they are meeting and exceeding their needs. ►



The industry now offers the widest choice of options
Image courtesy of The Gym Group.

“BY 2020, THE INDUSTRY IS LIKELY TO REACH SOME BIG MILESTONES: 7,000 CLUBS, TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF 10M AND VALUE OVER £5BN”

► INVESTMENT

However, they are not alone in pushing the boundaries and experimenting with innovation. Both the private mid-market operators and many public sector sites are also investing and expanding their market. Franchise brands have also had their best year to date and some top end brands are quoted as having more members now than ever before.

For the first time in five years, the public sector saw a small decline in membership numbers after closing more sites than it opened for the second year running. With almost 50 per cent of public sites still to go out to tender, the trusts and contract management companies have an opportunity to turn this decline back to growth in 2018 and beyond.

The trend data shows how the industry has grown over the last five years and in 2017 the industry now offers the widest possible choice of fitness options. New technology and innovation feeds into the existing industry at all levels and could in-part be responsible for helping expand the market.

DIVERSIFICATION

Location search, live timetables and deeper booking integration will be commonplace very shortly through search engines, social media platforms and apps. Online class bookings, currently available across 41 per cent of the private

sector and 61 per cent of the public, shows good levels of adoption, even if some of the interfaces are still clunky to use for the more tech-savvy consumers.

Meanwhile new fitness experiences, via travel companies, community groups and highly curated events, are often reliant on the consumer having higher levels of fitness to take part.

Boutiques and the growing fitness-for-free sector are all anecdotally helping expand the market, and opportunities at activewear shops, park gyms and meet-ups via apps all seem to be feeding into the core fitness industry.

The consumer brings greater expectation for a better and more connected experience, and despite the current political and fiscal uncertainties, the report remains very positive about the future. It may be a little premature to call the period between 2017 and 2020 the “golden age of fitness” but the industry is likely to reach some key milestones in 2018, including the number of fitness sites surpassing 7,000 for the first time, total membership exceeding 10m, market value totalling £5bn and the penetration rate easily surpassing 15 per cent of the total population. Obviously, the devil is in the detail and the detail is exactly what’s in this report. ●

Details from www.leisuredb.com/publications
David Minton is Director of LeisureDB



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NO PAIN ALL GAIN

DFC's My Payments service is a revolutionary online portal that takes the pain out of gym payments, helping to boost revenue and retention while enabling operators to focus on delivering top quality fitness experiences, as DFC's IT Development Manager Matt Clements explains

What makes My Payments stand out from other services on the market?

My Payments marks a significant step forward for processing Direct Debit payments for health clubs. It's an online portal that makes it simple and easy for customers to pay defaulted fees quickly, securely and privately through a variety of platforms.

It's simple to use and accessible 24/7, giving members payment flexibility outside working hours and saving health and fitness operators the arduous task of manually chasing up payments.

What is the impact of this on retention?

Massive. Rejected Direct Debit payments are a huge headache for



Matt Clements says DFC can greatly free up time for clubs

operators and customers alike and one of the biggest causes of lapsed memberships. Customers tend to bury their heads and ignore the problem – either because they're too busy or embarrassed by the situation – while the added admin is a significant burden for operators. My Payments takes

care of all these issues in minutes, meaning members can quickly get back into the gym and operators can free up more time for attracting new joiners and enhancing their offering.

How did DFC come to create My Payments?

We're constantly working with our clients to ensure their needs are being

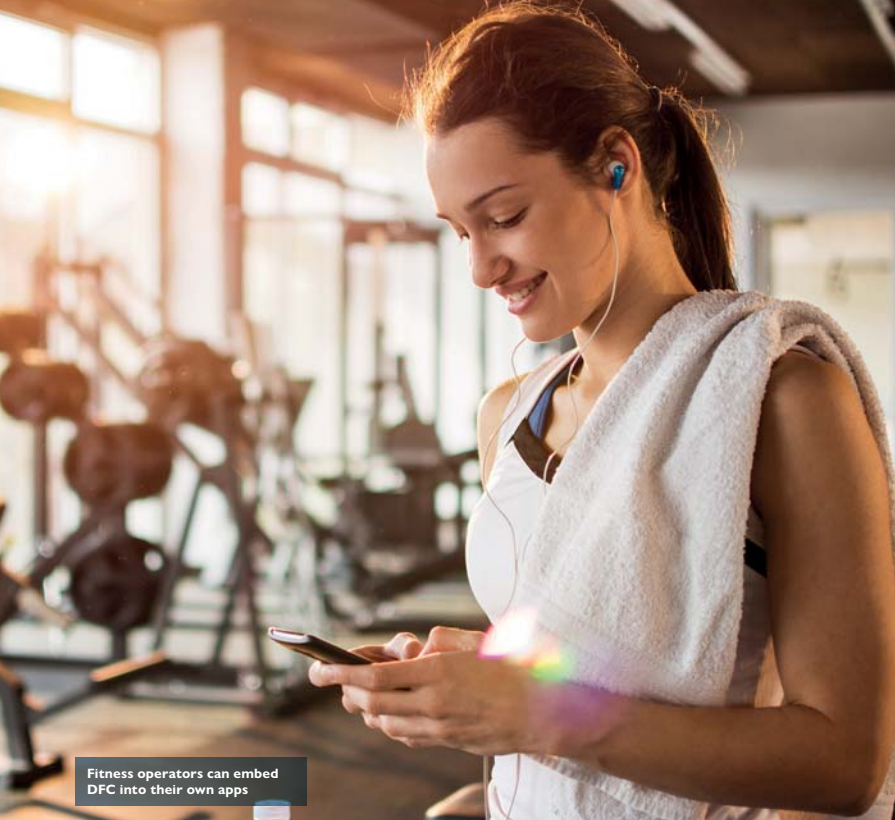
best met and what quickly became clear was that there was a huge gap in the market for My Payments.

Since its introduction two years ago, the service has proven so successful that more than 50 per cent of members have chosen it to pay defaults.

As a result, DFC has seen a dramatic upturn in service at our call centre, because we've been able to dedicate more time to each caller to provide above and beyond customer care.



“ Since its introduction two years ago, the service has proven so successful that more than 50 per cent of members have chosen it to pay defaults ”



Fitness operators can embed DFC into their own apps

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

How have developments in the sector fed into the refinement of My Payments?

We're seeing more and more operators launching apps and many DFC clients have now chosen to embed My Payments into their own app to further reduce friction in the customer journey. This has taken the strain off busy facilities that don't have the time or knowledge to discuss queries, and created an easily accessible platform for them to track payments. We've also recently released additional features to My Payments to improve first contact resolution, such as automatically updating bank details for any cancelled Direct Debits to avoid further rejected payments and also updating customer contact details so we can effectively administer their account.

Have changing consumer trends also played a part in My Payments success?

I certainly think so. In the same way that DFC and my team of developers has grown since I joined as a computer science graduate in 2011, the fitness industry has significantly expanded and diversified in that time. Where once people would have a single membership at a big box gym which catered to all their needs, today's consumer often has an array of memberships and payment plans incorporating a low-cost gym, boutique classes and perhaps outdoor training as well. This greater market segmentation means payments are more complicated than they once were, making it essential for us to provide a simple way to pay for fitness and the greater levels of customer service that they've come to expect.

WHAT IS DFC?

DFC is a leading Direct Debit collection company that specialises in the leisure sector, making it easier for operators and their members to keep on top of Direct Debit gym payments and spend more time on the things that matter to them.

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STREAMING BIG

Live streaming of classes is a hot trend. **Tom Walker** says clubs should be embracing the opportunity and not seeing it as a threat

From its start as an haphazard selection of user-created videos on Youtube, online fitness has matured to be highly commercialised. Specialist pay-to-view providers, such as Beachbody, Wellbeats and Fitness on Demand, offer impressive virtual fitness experiences and equally impressive user numbers.

The pull of the virtual market has also attracted players such as programming giant Les Mills, which recently launched an on-demand service.

WIDENING THE REACH

As virtual fitness operators look to differentiate their offer, live streaming of classes is emerging as a hot trend, offering consumers the opportunity to engage with other "classmates" and instructors, adding a community aspect to the online fitness experience.

Some online providers, such as the Daily Burn, are introducing live streams as bonus content alongside their on-demand

services. Daily Burn recently began streaming once-daily, live classes, targeting beginner-level fitness enthusiasts and aimed to attract them to explore the on-demand offer.

For others, streaming is their main service. US-based livestreamingfitness.com offers 24-hour access to live streaming classes and live chat with trainers and nutritionists, for a monthly fee of US\$9.99. We look at some of the leading players...



Having celeb members can attract live streaming contracts. See page 58



WILLIAM LYNCH
President, Peloton

"You can imagine other fitness categories and fitness experiences that can be delivered to consumers using the Peloton technology and content platform"

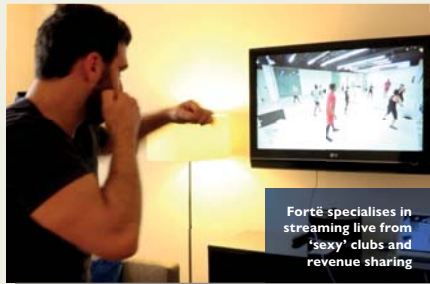
Peloton

Perhaps the most high-profile entrant to the live online fitness market has been Peloton, the indoor bike manufacturer that's based its entire business model on streaming live classes to exercise lovers.

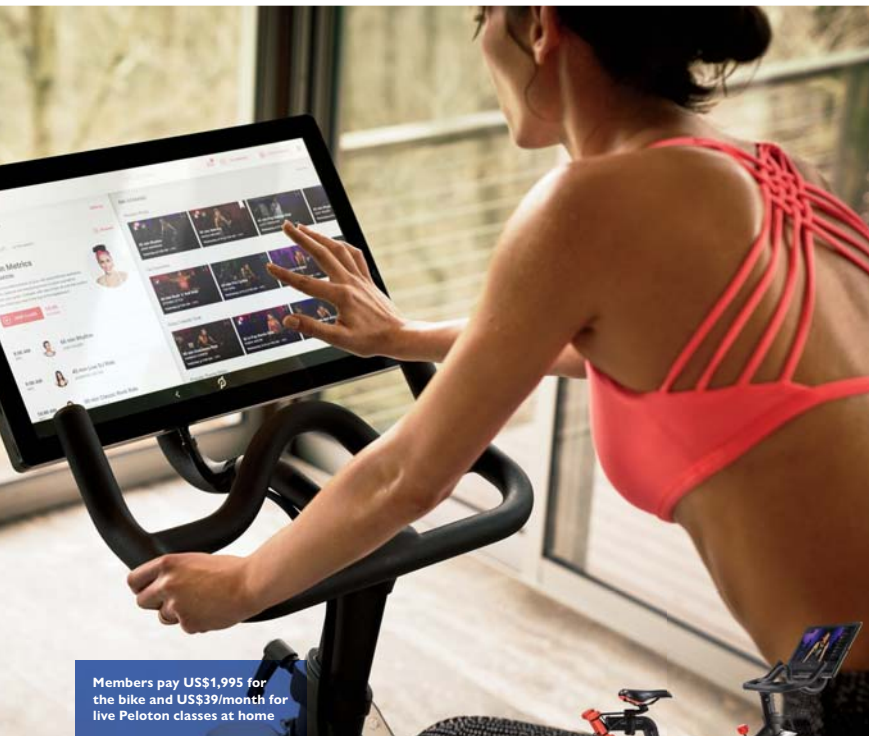
The concept behind Peloton is simple: consumers buy the bike, install it at home and start taking part in live classes streamed to a large, 22-inch HD touch screen attached to the bike.

Up to 14 live classes are streamed each day from a studio in New York, which people can also attend in person. Each bike is priced at US\$1,995 and users are required to sign up for a US\$39 monthly pass to gain access to the classes.

During the live classes, users can compare their performance to other people taking the class in real time, making it addictively competitive and highly motivating. "Peloton is a very interactive, motivating experience," says Carolyn Tisch Blodgett, Peloton's senior VP of brand and marketing.



Fortē specialises in streaming live from 'sexy' clubs and revenue sharing



Members pay US\$1,995 for the bike and US\$39/month for live Peloton classes at home

"The instructors can see the riders who are in their classes and identify them by their leaderboard name – they can see everything from the participants' performance stats to different milestones (ie 100th ride), and give shoutouts to people at home in real time.

"This is an important aspect of the Peloton offering – the fact that you can be at home but participating in a real class where the instructor can actually see and interact with you."

Peloton's birth story indicates that investors have confidence in the live streaming model. The company raised US\$120m in private capital to enable it to begin the production of the bikes. The first were delivered in 2014 and since then Peloton has grown exponentially. It currently has nearly 500,000 customers – including bike owners, mobile app users, and in-studio riders.

There are signs the business is heading into the facilities market, having just had a further funding injection of US\$75m from

Peloton has done a deal with Westin Hotels & Resorts, to get commercial-grade versions of its bikes into hotel fitness studios and hotel rooms

private equity firm Catterton, whose portfolio also includes studio operators CorePower Yoga, and Pure Barre.

Also hot off the press is the news Peloton has done a deal with Westin Hotels & Resorts, to get commercial-grade versions of its bikes into both hotel fitness studios and hotel rooms at select locations. The move is part of Westin's push into the wellness travel market.

Peloton Founder and CEO John Foley said: "Members of our passionate rider community have voiced their desire to continue the Peloton experience while travelling – and we've listened. Through



this partnership, not only can riders continue to get the workout they love while away from home, we can also introduce Peloton to a new audience."

The company trebled sales from 2015 to 2016 and the partnership with Westin signals a move to expand into new markets, as part of the land grab around fitness tech. The company looks likely to continue to diversify, as president William Lynch told CNBC in a recent interview: "You can imagine other fitness categories and experiences that can be delivered to consumers using the technology and content platform we've built". ▶

“We look at the studio’s ‘sexy’ factor – one of my favourites is Aerospace, NYC – if you’re lucky you can spot Victoria’s Secret model Adriana Lima (below) or actor Hugh Jackman working out”

LAUREN FOUNDOS CEO, Fortë



Join a Fortë class from home and you can enjoy events unfolding in real time



Fortë

Fortë, described as “Netflix meets Facebook Live, but just for fitness”, is another live streaming provider. Rather than offering classes from a single club, Fortë’s business model is based on providing subscribers exclusive access to a number of boutique studio classes – ranging from boxing, yoga and running to barre and meditation. Fortë installs hardware and software into boutique studios, which enable the classes to be streamed live to Fortë’s platform.

“A subscription gives our customers unlimited access to all live classes from all studios,” says Lauren Foundos, CEO and Founder of Fortë. “You can stream Fortë at home, the gym or even a hotel. Depending on what equipment you have access to – or none at all – you can choose the perfect workout for you.”

Foundos says that Fortë’s USP is to offer live classes from exclusive, trendy clubs and studios – such as Exhale, Centered City Yoga, Aerospace and RIPPED Fitness. “Studios are selected using specific variables,” she says.

“The first is the size – a larger studio brings a larger community, strong brand

Fortë installs hardware and software into boutique studios, which enable the classes to be streamed live to Fortë’s platform

recognition, and a larger team to work with, ensuring a smoother workflow.

“We also look at the studio’s ‘sexy’ factor. For example, one of my favourite studios to work out at is Aerospace – a boxing studio where you can expect to train like a real fighter. It’s extremely swanky; and if you’re lucky you can spot Victoria’s Secret model Adriana Lima or actor Hugh Jackman working out.”

The business model is simple. “We revenue share with our partner studios. The studios are paid based on viewership, so those being consumed the most will be earning the most. We’re completely transparent about our costs, and we consider ourselves true partners with clubs. They continue to build great content, and we continue to advance the technology and platform enabling them to give their dedicated online followers the best remote experience possible.” ►



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FitCloudConnect



FitCloudConnect partners with gyms to stream workouts to members wherever they are



"I was a member of a club and a frequent traveller. I asked myself, 'why shouldn't I be able to take my gym with me wherever I go?'. I realised someone would come up with a solution, so why not me?"

BRAD WEBER CEO, FitCloudConnect

While virtual operators such as Peloton might be seen as rivals to gyms, live streaming can also be used by clubs to improve retention and extend the gym experience outside the four walls. One live streaming provider that helps clubs achieve this is US-based FitCloudConnect.

"I was a member of a club but also a frequent traveller," says FitCloudConnect CEO Brad Weber. "One day I asked myself the question, 'why, in this age of technology, shouldn't I be able to take my gym with me wherever I go?'. I realised that someone would eventually come up with a solution, so thought why not me?"

Two years after his eureka moment, Weber launched FitCloudConnect with the aim of partnering with fitness clubs and enabling them to offer a mobile version of their gym to members.

The company acts as a third-party and hosts 'virtual gyms'. Its cloud-based service can be adjusted to each club's needs.

"Our system provides complete flexibility to the fitness club or wellness provider to set it up how they please," Weber says. "We use non-proprietary tech so any device – phone, laptop, tablet or desktop – with a browser and internet access can access the live streams.

FitCloudConnect acts as a third-party and hosts 'virtual gyms' for club members

"The platform is licensed to fitness and wellness providers, who then white-label the technology and offer it to members. Clubs can stream third-party programming, or their own. We're just a delivery platform for whatever they want to offer."

FitCloudConnect's live streams follow a club's class timetable, so consumers can schedule and plan their attendance, pick regular classes and even get to know the instructor. "Having access to the instructor on a regular schedule is a key aspect of member engagement," Weber says. "Watching videos of celebrity fitness classes doesn't enable a connection between instructor and member."

THE WAY FORWARD

Both Weber and Foundos say that rather than seeing live streaming as a threat, clubs should see it as an opportunity: "Clubs have traditionally relied on members visiting their physical club,"

says Weber. "This has been the business model and it will continue to be the foundation of the sector. However, with cloud tech there are now numerous companies offering fitness directly.

"Demographics are changing too, with Millennials and an active ageing population living connected lifestyles. Clubs need to embrace digital fitness."

Forté's Foundos agrees. "Live streaming is a huge opportunity," she says. "It enables clubs to focus on their core business while leveraging technology to build a bigger audience and strengthen their brand awareness globally without the risks involved with taking on expensive bricks and mortar growth."

Foundos says that having an attractive virtual presence can also improve numbers at the physical club. "There's evidence that streaming actually drives users into the club," she says.

"We've seen many users visit their favourite streaming studios in person. There's also another subset of users that are uncomfortable checking out studios on their own, especially when they've never done that type of workout before, so allowing them to get confident by doing the workout at home first has also been found to drive club visits." ●

MOVEMENT AS MEDICINE

Lifestyle brand Bodyism is blurring the lines between fitness and spa in the ultra-luxury sector. **Jane Kitchen** talks to founder James Duigan about his loyal tribe of followers



"Truly listening and transforming lives – that's our 'why', that's our purpose," said Duigan



Duigan and his wife, Christiane, who oversees Bodyism's supplement and activewear business

Ten years ago, Australian-born personal trainer James Duigan founded Bodyism – billed today as a global wellness and lifestyle company – with a mission to spread his catchy ‘Clean and Lean’ philosophy to as many people as he could.

Duigan's Bodyism is a holistic approach to fitness, and blends traditional workouts with supplements, branded merchandise, and mindful eating.

Today, it has a flagship fitness centre in London's Notting Hill – complete with things like purified oxygen and Vitamin D-emitting lights – and a series of partnerships with some of the hottest new hotel wellness centres around the world, including The Raleigh Hotel in Miami Beach, Amilla Fushi in the Maldives and the recently opened wellness centre at the Lanesborough in London.

PARTNERING FOR GROWTH

Bodyism is blurring the line between fitness and spa, nestling into a comfortable space under the luxury wellness umbrella. Duigan says partnerships with hotels and spas mean that Bodyism devotees discover new places – and the hotels benefit from the brand's devoted following. Another part of the success is Bodyism's merchandise, and the branding, which Duigan says means customers spend both more time and more money.

Among others, Bodyism has partnerships with Fairmont in Dubai, the Capri Palace in Italy and Amilla Fushi in the Maldives



Actor Hugh Grant is a Bodyism devotee

These partnerships involve both a brand fee and a revenue share, but Duigan says “every time we’ve done a partnership, everybody’s done really well – it’s just always been very successful, and revenue’s jumped... It’s a huge value for all of our hotel partners. People will choose a hotel because they can train with Bodyism; it’s a great symbiotic relationship.”

Bodyism's most recent partnership is with Oetker Hotel's London outpost, The

Lanesborough, which has opened an 18,000sq ft (1,672sq m) spa and wellness centre designed to be “one of London's most exclusive private members fitness and health clubs.” Bodyism is managing the fitness portion of the club, and creating programmes for club members. It will also bring a number of its signature programmes to the centre, as well as its holistic therapy, which incorporates yoga, personal training and nutrition.

“I think what we bring is something unique in terms of how we take care of people at Bodyism, by truly listening and transforming lives; that’s our ‘why’ – that’s our purpose,” says Duigan.

Duigan has worked closely with Beata Alexandrowicz, founder of Pure Massage, who has overseen the therapists’ training at The Lanesborough, to create a more seamless link between spa and fitness. “Therapists will be in communication with trainers,” Duigan explains. “This gives the personalisation that clients want.”

THE NEXT FRONTIER

The brand also has partnerships with the Fairmont on The Palm Jumeirah in Dubai, the Capri Palace Hotel in Italy, and the D-Hotel Maris in Turkey. Bodyism's



Nutrition includes menus developed around unprocessed, seasonal food with a focus on quality



Bodyism is partnering with Miami Beach's Raleigh Hotel for a project that will be 'like nothing else,' says Duigan

We do movement very differently, in terms of building the body up, as opposed to depleting it

work with the Amilla Fushi resort in the Maldives at its Javvu Spa again saw the lines between spa and fitness blurred.

There are upcoming plans for a location in Greece, as well as a significant project underway at The Raleigh Hotel in Miami Beach, which "will be like nothing else," Duigan says. Duigan and his wife, Christiane – his business partner, who oversees the supplement and activewear portion of the business – will move to Los Angeles in July, to focus on the brand's expansion in the US, which Duigan calls "our next frontier."

Still, he says, they'll take on that frontier slowly and deliberately. "We've chosen very carefully in terms of where we are and who we work with, and continue to be very discerning," he says. "There are never going to be a thousand Bodyisms around the world."

CLEAN AND LEAN

Bodyism's 'Clean and Lean' philosophy refers to the body being 'clean' of toxins and 'lean' as a result of nourishing food and regular exercise – not necessarily groundbreaking health and fitness concepts, but all packaged up in neat, easy-to-digest packages and beautifully branded merchandise that devotees can take with them on the go. The brand has a following – both celebrity and otherwise (actor Hugh Grant and model Lara Stone are both devotees) – due in large part to this easy-to-understand lifestyle approach. "Over the years

we've worked with many high-profile people who make their living by how they look, and happily we've understood and found that what works fastest and best is focusing on your health," explains Duigan. "So we do movement very differently – we look at movement in terms of it nourishing your body and building your body up, as opposed to depleting it and breaking it down. It's really a completely different way of looking at how the human body moves and why we're doing exercise."

Bodyism's clientele is often globally minded, spreading time between London, New York, Paris and LA, so it's important to create a programme that can move with them wherever they go. Clients don't work with one trainer, but rather with a team of people,

which can include yoga experts, ballet teachers, boxing coaches, fascial stretch therapists, nutrition coaches, holistic healers or massage therapists.

A HOLISTIC LIFESTYLE

With Bodyism, a 'Body Oracle' assessment takes a close look at clients' lifestyles in order to match them with the right combination of trainers and experts. "It's a very holistic approach, with a team of people working with one person," explains Duigan. "We work on the hope that life is long, and you only have one body."

Founded on the belief that movement is medicine, the fitness part of the programme incorporates a wide variety of techniques focused on alignment, posture, intelligent weight training, functional movement, stretching and



Different ways of moving, such as yoga and stretching, are part of Bodyism's philosophy



Pilates, and features programmes like Bodyism Acroyoga – which combines acrobatics and yoga – and Bodyism Ballet, which focuses on attaining graceful posture and maximising core strength.

Nutrition includes menus developed around unprocessed, seasonal food, with a focus on quality of ingredients rather than calorie-counting. Clean and Lean supplements are tailored to specific needs or problems, such as getting a good night's sleep, improving digestion, increasing energy or improving complexion – and are the fastest-growing part of the business. They enable busy people "to gain a huge amount of health benefits without the stress or pressure,"

says Duigan. "Each supplement was created with a single pillar of health in mind. I looked at what people needed and worked backwards from that."

The lifestyle aspect spills over into merchandise, with Clean and Lean cookbooks, pregnancy books, fitness equipment, activewear clothing, and a range of herbal teas. "It's a mindset – a philosophy," says Duigan. "There's a lot around the brand – it really tells a story."

And that mindset has helped fuel a growing tribe of devoted followers. But Duigan also attributes much of his success to the reasons he founded the company in the first place. "We always focused on why we were doing what

we're doing," he explains. "Our 'why' was to change people's lives. It brought more depth and gravitas to what we did. I'm a bit old-fashioned in that I believe that if you do a really good job and add value to people's lives, then you'll have a good business." ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Immersed in group fitness

Les Mills' The Trip transforms the group fitness offering at West Wood Club in Dublin

There's been a buzz surrounding West Wood Club recently, following a successful party thrown by the Dublin health club group to celebrate the launch of its newly-designed Les Mills studios and also Les Mills' 'The Trip' – a fully immersive cycling experience that takes riders on a journey through digitally-created worlds.

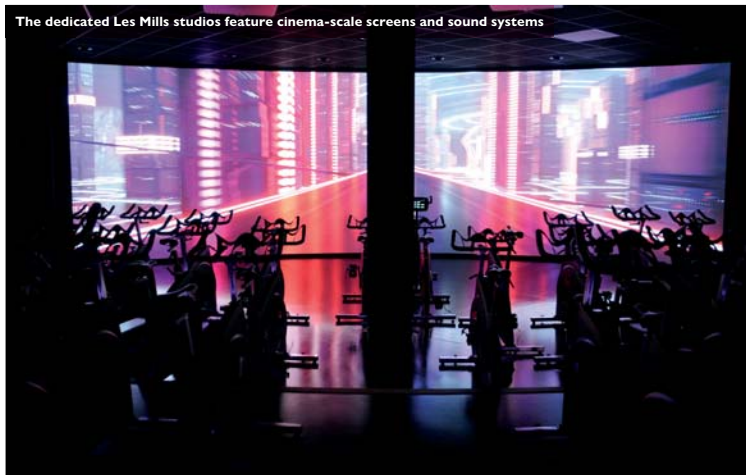
"We had champagne, beer, promotional videos, chocolate fountains, photographers – you name it," says Karen Polley, group operational manager at West Wood Club. "The launch was key to creating awareness and excitement for these new products."

The new Les Mills offerings at West Wood are part of a €17.2m development package that is being made in the high-end, luxury chain from August 2016 to August 2017. The business, which has been in existence for around 30 years, also recently bought three Crunch Fitness clubs (no relation to US chain) and now



'The Trip' is a fully immersive Les Mills cycling experience

The dedicated Les Mills studios feature cinema-scale screens and sound systems





The new offerings at West Wood Club are part of a €17.2m development

comprises six clubs, all within Dublin. With a €79 monthly membership and €499 joining fee, membership across the three original clubs was at 22,000 but has now been brought up to 36,000 across the six clubs.

Alan Leach, group general manager and director of sales and marketing at VWest Wood, confirms that a huge part of the investment will go into the group fitness offering across all of the clubs.

"We're always investing and aiming to be the future of fitness," he explains. "We were already known for group fitness, so we decided to exploit that."

"Research we carried out some years back showed that our reputation was very strong in this area, so a policy decision was taken to make group fitness the main focus on our investment as the business grew, and that decision has driven significant profitability and business success for us."

THE LES MILLS EFFECT

This involved refurbishing old studios and turning them into Les Mills' immersive studios, with the cinema-scale screens and sound systems that are required to offer The Trip. The dedicated studios have now been rolled out into three of the clubs, with the other three soon to follow.

"Les Mills is a huge part of what we do," says Leach. "We decided about eight years ago that we wanted to be the number one destination in Ireland for ▶

The club has seen a healthy rise in membership



▶ A LES MILLS PROMOTION



Forty per cent of West Wood's members currently attend at least one group fitness class per week

group fitness. If you go back to 10 years ago, our fitness classes would take place in average, wooden-floored, white-walled studios. Karen was behind the decision to renew those studios and make them part of the experience. We've put a lot of time, money and effort into that."

"Our first Les Mills-branded studio was a big risk," he continues. "But it went amazingly well – our numbers went through the roof, it had a huge impact on our social media and Google Analytics showed that over a 12 month period, the number of people looking at our class timetables increased by about 110 per cent. That studio got us through the recession, and as a result, we decided to replicate that in all our other clubs."

This impressive impact on the clubs has not dropped off over time. In 2009, West Wood's three original clubs had just 21,000 visits to group fitness. In 2016, those same three clubs received 39,000 visits. The group's Net Promoter Score – a measure of customer loyalty – jumped from 14 per cent in 2014 to 39 per cent in 2016.

CREATING A COMMUNITY

Leach notes that 40 per cent of West Wood's members currently attend at least one of the 120 group fitness classes on offer each week. He believes that this is down to the community atmosphere that Les Mills classes create.

"The foyer outside the studios is a hive of activity before the classes," he says. "Everyone gets to know each other and



"Our first Les Mills-branded studio was a big risk, but it went amazingly well – our numbers went through the roof"

Alan Leach

once they become part of the community, those people don't leave."

And it's not just the members who love Les Mills. "Les Mills gives us a consistent product," explains Polley. "They have all the research and science behind what they do. They do the choreography and the music. We just bring in passionate staff, continually upskill them and make sure we're delivering it to the highest standard."

Since January, Les Mills' The Trip has been the talk of the membership. "It really has brought more excitement into the club," Polley says. "We've been managing it carefully – we want to create excitement and make people want to attend, but we don't want to run so many classes that it becomes standard. We're keeping it slightly exclusive for now."

But the team at West Wood Clubs will not be resting on their laurels. "We truly believe when we come to work that we want to break records," says Leach.

"More sales, more revenue, better retention, lower attrition and higher participation in classes. We want to be seen as more than just a gym." ●



West Wood places a strong focus on upskilling staff

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A NEW DAWN

As the nation prepares for its next political chapter, ukactive's newly-appointed CEO, **Steven Ward**, looks at opportunities ahead for our sector

When I think of the huge momentum and strides taken by the physical activity sector in recent years, I see tremendous scope over the coming years for us to be a driving force in building a healthier and wealthier society.

From a personal perspective, the past few weeks have seen me reflect on my career at ukactive with particular focus. Having joined the then-FIA as a policy intern back in October 2006, I've witnessed both ukactive, and the physical activity sector it represents, change beyond recognition over the past decade and the progress has been staggering.

Driven by the growth of ukactive's members, our industry has gone from being perceived as a niche lifestyle sector to a £7.7bn behemoth acknowledged by government as being integral to the future health of our nation and economy.

TIME FOR CHANGE

So it was with immense pride last month that I accepted the ukactive board's invitation to become the CEO of this great organisation. I've greatly enjoyed my past two years as director, working with our chair, Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, to build on the legacy of Dave Stalker and Fred Turok, without whom nothing we're doing today would be possible.

The green shoots of progress from new ukactive initiatives – such as ActiveLab and Future Leaders – are already starting to sprout, and we remain rooted as ever in adding value to our members by delivering against their core commercial agenda.

A CULTURE SHIFT

Where once we were living in the dark, our sector is now on the verge of being blinded by the light, thanks to the sheer amount of information available. This is the age when evidence-based initiatives such as the DataHub in partnership with 4Global (see page 72) and the ukactive national aggregated Exercise Referral Database, in partnership with ReferAll,



Ward (right), seen here at ActiveLab, has been appointed CEO

Our industry has gone from being a niche lifestyle sector to a £7.7bn behemoth integral to the future health of our nation and economy

will empower operators to make better, data-driven business decisions.

I also see a significant cultural shift ahead as the maturation of CIMSPA provides our sector with a workforce of skill and diversity to power it forward.

PARTNERSHIPS

ukactive will work to consolidate its position as the heartbeat of the physical activity agenda, upweighting our sector as the solution to society's most pressing problems, such as an overstretched NHS, ageing population and unproductive workplaces.

This will bring greater opportunities for impactful partnerships with organisations such as Sport England and Public Health England, a wider pool of funding streams and an expanded market to serve.

And then there's the work in play to stimulate innovation and breakthrough thinking across the sector with ActiveLab. If we can demonstrate the UK's potential as a hotbed of innovation, there's a massive opportunity for it to find its place on the world stage.

A new political dawn will break on 9 June this year. But whatever its colour, we as a sector must be ready to unite to create a society where physical activity becomes the population's natural choice from cradle to grave. ●



Public Affairs Media Partner

LEARNING FROM LATIN AMERICA

A new report provides valuable data on the Latin American market.

IHRSA's Kristen Walsh explains

Last month, IHRSA released The IHRSA Latin American Report (Second Edition), which is sponsored by Hoist Fitness. This research publication, an update to the groundbreaking 2012 report, was produced in collaboration with Mercado Fitness (Argentina) and supported by trade body Fitness Brasil.

A HEALTHY INDUSTRY

According to the report, the health club industry in Latin America is robust. The 18 Latin American markets analysed generate US\$6 billion in revenue from more than 65,000 clubs. Nearly 20 million Latin Americans are members of a health club. Brazil alone accounts for more than half of the health clubs in Latin America with 34,509 facilities. Argentina has the highest penetration rate among all the markets, at 6.8 per cent of Argentinians currently belong to a health club.

"The health club landscape in Latin America is dynamic and has undergone significant developments since 2012," said Guillermo Velez, editor of the report and director of Mercado Fitness. "In addition to the growth of the low-cost segment, other developments, including economic indicators, increasingly savvy consumers, technology, the boutique phenomenon and professionalisation have all impacted and shaped the industry in Latin America."

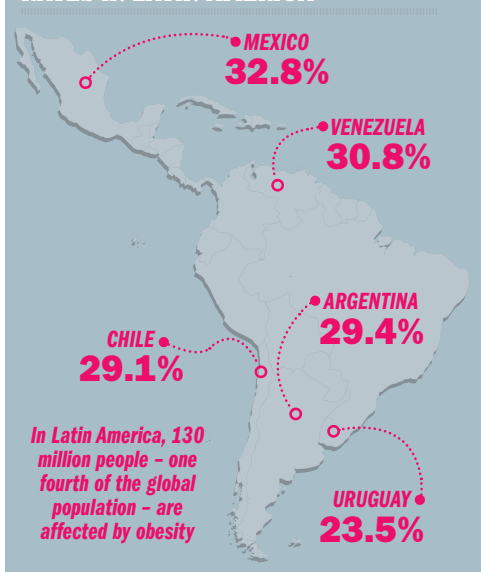
ROOM FOR GROWTH

While club operators and industry experts have observed growth amidst market developments in the region, opportunities abound in Latin America. The report shows an average penetration rate of 2.15 per cent, signifying potential for growth. Along with Argentina's 6.8 per cent, Brazil and Mexico both have member penetration rates exceeding 3 per cent, at 4.6 per cent and 3.2 per cent, respectively.



"The growth of the low-cost gym market, increasingly savvy consumers, technology, the boutique phenomenon and professionalisation have all shaped the industry in Latin America" - Guillermo Velez

OBESEITY PERCENTAGE RATES IN LATIN AMERICA





The majority of clubs in Latin America belong to Smartfit, which owns 340 gyms throughout the region

Highlights from the report

■ Overcoming obesity

In Latin America, 130 million people – one fourth of the global population – are affected by obesity. These figures could reach 191 million by 2030. The countries with the highest rates of obesity are Mexico (32.8 per cent), Venezuela (30.8 per cent), Argentina (29.4 per cent), Chile (29.1 per cent) and Uruguay (23.5 per cent).

Obesity is a global pandemic: a person with obesity lives 10 years less than someone with a healthy weight. World Bank reports indicate that if this tendency continues, by 2030 the number of people in Latin America with obesity will reach 30 per cent of the population.

■ The problem of inactivity

World Health Organization data points out that in Latin America 60 per cent of the population is sedentary. This same agency indicates that in this region physical inactivity causes one out of every 10 deaths. This is nearly the same impact that smoking has on the population, according to scientists.

■ Embracing low cost

When the last regional IHRSA report was published in 2012, there were only two low cost chains in two countries in Latin America. Today, less than five years later, there are at least 23 different brands with a total of 448 gyms (340 of

these belong to SmartFit) in 12 countries throughout the region.

Undeniably, this phenomenon has only just begun. As consultant Ray Algar explains, "it's not only a matter of pricing, but more an all-embracing organisational philosophy". As far as consumers are concerned, "they know that high costs do not necessarily guarantee quality service and they're less obsessed with paying more just to prove status – they value their money and are convinced that paying less is more savvy".

Several specialists agree that the low cost offer stimulates a new demand and does not necessarily encourage less spending. However, they also remark that this model's growth will affect health clubs in the mid market.

Traditional gyms – full service in theory – must review their value propositions in order to validate higher

pricing. "Those who don't will be less valued and become irrelevant" claims Algar. The market tends to polarise itself and in between poles there will be nothing left.

■ A diverse offering

In competitive scenarios, with consumers eager for an enhanced experience, the fitness industry is undergoing a substantial diversification process. While premium health clubs and low cost gyms consolidate opposite poles within the market, boutique fitness studios – also known as Micro Gyms – thrive in Latin America as well as globally. ●

ABOUT IHRSA

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

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



GET THE REPORT

The IHRSA Latin American Report (Second Edition) [77 pages] is available as a PDF at

www.ihrsa.org/latin-american-report



THE POWER OF DATA

Real-time activity data could largely replace market research in figuring out what customers want and the best allocation of resources. We find out about The DataHub

Software systems can gather data to identify everything from how many 70-year-olds swam in your pool yesterday to your most popular lunchtime workout, but as an operator, how can you best make sense of this data and use it to its full advantage? The DataHub – a virtual

hub for sports and leisure data – has been created to do just that.

The system currently holds information from 157 health, fitness, sport and leisure operators relating to 270+ million visits from over seven million individuals. We talk to those in the know to find out how it came about, how it works in practice and what it means for the industry's future.



“Our aim is to be tracking 750 million active visits by mid 2018 and with The DataHub now open to non-facility-based activity providers our intelligence is becoming even more representative”

PHIL WHITE

HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND SUPPORT PLACES FOR PEOPLE
AND CHAIR OF XNLEISURE USER GROUP

“In my role as executive chair of the XNLeisure User Group, I'd taken part in benchmarking discussions around the potential of comparing data nationwide. But every system reports differently; while an adult swim is an adult swim, most operators call it something different.

The task of establishing a common way of analysing reports across the whole user base, rather than within a single facility seemed insurmountable.

The first step

We knew National Governing Bodies collated and held data, but extracting and analysing it was hard work.

The DataHub began when we met Badminton England, who were keen to measure initiatives they had running nationwide. Each centre called its badminton offer something different, making it difficult to get a global picture of how sites performed comparatively, and data analysis was very manual.

The Amateur Swimming Association also became involved with a drive to standardise swimming data and get accurate facts at the fingertips of regional staff. We realised then that we needed a virtual hub for all leisure data.

4 Global were instrumental in taking this vision and developing an independent system designed to act as the industry's go-to place for activity data.

It was a long process. No one in the industry was making decisions about standardisation and it took time to get momentum behind the idea that accurate data is critical for success. What started as a small project has become a repository of data from 157 operators, who between them run 1,200 sites.

There are one million transactions coming into the system daily. All the data is anonymised and standardised, so now, whatever an adult swim or badminton session is called locally, it's matched to data standards and reported accordingly.

Achieving momentum

For the first time, operators are actively sharing data so that everyone can make better decisions and each pound invested goes that little bit further. From that initial idea, The DataHub has gone from strength to strength and the possibilities are endless, now it has momentum.

Our aim is to be tracking 750 million active visits from 15-20 million individuals by mid 2018. With The DataHub now open to non-facility-based activity providers our intelligence is becoming even more representative, giving a layered view of active lives in the UK and ensuring operators know who their next member is likely to be, what their 'active journey' into the facility is and what offer best suits them and keeps them engaged.

Phil White has been involved with the DataHub since its inception, working to help bring the initial idea to fruition



The DataHub is tracking activity at 1,200 locations across the UK



"We can develop predictive models so we can position ourselves ahead of the curve to get the nation more active"

DR STEVEN MANN
RESEARCH DIRECTOR
UKACTIVE

As a sector we've got access to prolific amounts of data collected from things like leisure management software, fitness equipment and online platforms. But we don't always do a great job of channelling insights from that data back into our businesses and using it to help us move forwards.

Insight

The DataHub allows us to take that data and get insight across the whole activity sector for the first time; something we've talked about, but until now have been unable to do.

ukactive has a role as the DataHub's research insight and evaluation partner and we'll be working together to ensure that activity providers can make data-driven decisions, which will help the industry as a whole make faster progress in the right direction. We want to move from simply collecting data to actually connecting people across the sectors.

As an activity provider you want to know what works, what's on trend and where the industry's heading. Working with the DataHub we can now start finding this out; learning which programmes and initiatives are happening where and what's working to attract and keep members.

With access to such a vast amount of information we can develop predictive models relating to what our sector should be doing, so we can position ourselves ahead of the curve and start working together to get people active, rather than simply reacting to threats.

The general manager of your local Waitrose or Tesco will know within 30 minutes of shutting up shop for the day how they've traded compared to other stores; until now we've had nowhere near that level of insight.

The more we learn as a collective, rather than existing in individual groups, the more we grow as a whole.

DataHub universe

Used by 220 operators
and 2500 staff
280 million visits logged
3 million
members tracked

Inspired by other sectors

It was announced in May that we'll also be integrating the ukactive benchmarking service onto The DataHub platform and so that business performance benchmarking underpins everything we do. We hope the partnership will take that to a new level.

Our role now is to get as many operators as possible involved, both public and private sector, so we're getting the clearest picture we can. For too long we've only been able to show our impact, and how wide our reach is, through anecdotes. Now we're able to prove what an asset we are and what we've got to offer. The DataHub makes it fact.

Steve Mann is research director at the ukactive Research Institute, focusing on the delivery, feasibility and effectiveness of physical activity-promoting interventions delivered within community environments. ►



"DataHub is the result of the sector coming together with a straightforward solution to a clear challenge"

ALEX BURROWS

DIRECTOR
4 GLOBAL

Leisure has relied on basic, out of date tools to make investment decisions and, as a result, those decisions haven't always been as informed as they might have been. Founded in 2013, The DataHub is the result of the sector coming together with a straightforward solution to a clear challenge – creating a virtual repository for all leisure industry data.

Operators can now access relevant intelligence on what's working best

and through The DataHub modules it's possible for them to apply this understanding to any context.

This means informed decisions can be made in relation to growing customer demand and providing an offer that reflects the needs of local catchments. This helps every organisation to achieve their objectives, whether that's growing commercial returns or getting communities more active.

DataHub fact
Gym membership make-up:

52% Female

48% Male

Since its inception, that's been the crux of The DataHub as a co-operative platform – to get the nation healthier by sharing live, business-critical intelligence.

What's the deal?

To make things simple, The DataHub has partnered with leisure system providers covering 95 per cent of the sector, to automatically extract data from software systems and securely push it to the central repository.

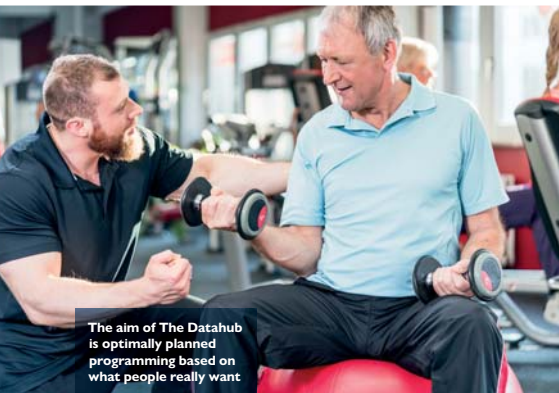
Because data feeds are automatic, every operator joining can immediately get a true reflection of what 'good' looks like, enabling staff to be accountable and proactive in applying solutions.

The DataHub offers various modules, delivered by DataHub partners who are each specialists in their own field.

Access to core modules, data cleansing and standards alignment module, data integrity, and NGB Benchmarking modules are free for all operators, with other modules on subscription.

Accumulated data has power: We can use it to tell how people are getting active, where and when, then operators can accurately reflect this in optimally planned programming that is based on what people really want, rather than guesswork.

Alex Burrows has been a sports consultant for 12 years and as part of 4 global's team was a founding partner of the Sport Intelligence Practice and DataHub project



The aim of The DataHub is optimally planned programming based on what people really want

Is your health club making your members ill?

- 30% of members put hygiene in the top 5 reasons for choosing a health club
- 40% of health clubs contain harmful pathogens including Chlamydia and Staph
- 29% of members believe they have contracted an infection from the Gym
- 51% of health clubs have no or inadequate disinfection protocols
- 20% of health club members carry MRSA





"DataHub's Social Value Calculator can be monetised and used to bid for future funding by operators"

WILL BARR

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE MANAGER
GLL

The DataHub is governed by an industry Steering Group, which consists of ukactive, CLOA, Sporta, Sport Wales, CSPN, 4 global, the main NGBs, national operators and leisure management system providers.

Its role is to lead discussions on data standards and grow The DataHub, so the entire sector is using it to drive operational improvement and as the go-to place for sector research and analysis.

It's a first; never before have so many sector organisations been united under one umbrella with such a fundamental mandate, and with accurate data at their fingertips to deliver this step change.

Industry breakthrough

The Group is working to educate the sector so everyone understands the inherent value of knowing what 'good' really looks like for the first time.

Because The DataHub standardises data, it gives us the ability to accurately benchmark. That's huge. Whether you're a single site or GLL you can finally compare like with like and make decisions with a higher degree of reliability.

As a charitable social enterprise, GLL uses the Social Value Calculator (SVC), delivered in partnership with Experian and Sheffield Hallam University, to measure the social value of interventions. If we put on a specific activity, for example, No Strings Badminton, we can now demonstrate its social impact by



We can now demonstrate social impact by demographic group

demographic group and map it to see where social value has been generated.

Crucially the Social Value generated can be monetised, by creating information we can use to bid for funding.

We've worked at the front end with 4 global in creating the SVC, helping to ensure the module is fit for purpose and meets real operators' needs.

If every operator came on board, The DataHub has the potential to become the national standard. The industry spends lots on research to help establish national aims and agendas. But if we're honest, a lot of it is questionable and not benchmarkable. We now have the

intelligence to ensure decisions are data-driven, based on what we know about users, uptake, growth and utilisation.

As well as sitting on The DataHub Steering Group, Will Barr heads up the business intelligence team at GLL and has implemented the use of DataHub's Social Value Calculator (SVC) module at its 250 sites to drive GLL's funding bids. ●

Find out more: www.datahubclub.com



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Sound solutions

Flooring is often overlooked as an essential part of a fitness club's 'kit'. German specialist BSW explains how the right flooring can dramatically improve the fitness experience

Fitness centres are increasingly found in larger building complexes, often located among offices, apartments, shops or medical practices. Impact sound from rhythmic step sequences, equipment being moved or weights and dumbbells being replaced hurriedly or even dropped can, in some cases, travel through the entire building structure, resulting in noise pollution for neighbours. Shock waves conducted into walls and ceilings can be emitted as sound in other parts of the building – frequently leading to disputes with neighbours or increasing noise levels in the fitness centre itself.

Impact sound insulation

Berleburger Schaumstoffwerk GmbH (BSW) is not only an expert in sports flooring, but also in the application of special sound and vibration insulation for commercial buildings. Besides the

BSW is not only an expert in sports flooring, but also in the application of special sound and vibration insulation for commercial buildings



intended qualities of protecting the athletes and the screed floors, the extensive range of gym flooring also provides impact sound insulation. BSW's everroll® floors consist of polyurethane or synthetic rubber; two innately elastic and sound insulating materials.

If the already significant impact sound values of everroll® gym flooring are not sufficient, BSW can, on request, design project-specific solutions for reducing

impact sound in fitness centres. These single-layer products from BSW offer protection against vibrations and provide a training surface that is easy on joints.

They also have good to very good impact sound insulation properties, ensuring more acceptable noise levels in adjacent rooms. everroll® can also reduce impact sound or even eliminate it completely and diminish the echo in larger rooms. A special solution for fitness centre impact sound insulation is the point-elastic gym floor everroll® impact+.

Through its two-layer structure, it unites the most important properties. The floor consists of a Regupol® shock pad and an everroll® surface layer. The base layer provides the impact sound insulation and protection for screed or other floor structures, while the surface layer's elasticity alleviates the strain on athletes' joints during power training. In most cases, the impact sound reduction



The Berlin fitness studio
AXT CrossFit was fitted
with everroll® impact+

The everroll range



everroll crosstle

Ideally suited to dumbbell and free weight areas – the elastic floor sheet everroll® crosstle

everroll impact+

everroll® impact+ is the two-layer gym flooring from BSW and offers protection both for athletes and screed floors. Its high level of impact sound absorption is a welcome side effect.

everroll multile

everroll® multile cushions the strain caused by strenuous physical exercise. The elastic base layer shields the substructure from shockwaves.

of over 21 dB makes additional insulation measures unnecessary.

Fitness operators benefit from the improved acoustics this special surface generates. Members' can hear music and understand exercise instructions through loudspeakers so much better when annoying background noise is reduced.

Adapted solutions

Besides the products in track segments, the elastic tiles, everroll® multile, everroll® weightlayer and everroll® crosstle, also have good to very good impact sound insulation properties. By shielding the substructure from impact damage, they are particularly suitable for dumbbell or free weights areas. The combination of excellent subfloor protection, high impact sound insulation and a good force reduction rating make these tiles a very popular choice.

Regupol® sound 12 is an elastic base layer ideally suited to area-elastic



everroll® gym flooring in the Roko Health Club in Chiswick, UK

sports floors with wooden surfaces.

In combination with load distribution boards and a range of parquet floors, this elastic layer is an excellent sports floor and provides outstanding impact sound insulation. Regupol® sound 12 also improves room acoustics, and puts anyone doing yoga or aerobic exercises on a stable footing, thanks to its ideal force reduction.



FIBO 2017

This year's FIBO in Cologne, the world's largest fitness, wellness and health fair, was a great success for sports flooring manufacturer BSW.

For years, FIBO has been an important part of the company's international strategy. This was confirmed by the enormous interest shown by people from all over the world. Visitors from European countries, such as Italy, Austria, the Netherlands and Belgium, but also from China, Qatar, Saudi-Arabia, the United States and the United Arab Emirates showed a great interest in BSW products and took time to consult our experts.

This year, too, it was the product variety that attracted numerous visitors from a total of 42 different countries to the BSW booth. The track segment and tile products in the everroll® gym flooring range, but also the separate screed insulation proved to be the main sources of interest. CrossFit is currently very much the trend among athletes and fitness centre operators. For this sector, BSW developed the everroll® crosstle elastic floor sheets, which are robust enough to provide the insulation and impact absorption required for dumbbell and kettlebell areas. Booth visitors were also impressed by the various judo mats, designed for training a range of different martial arts and which are also used in international competitions. Besides the countless decors, thicknesses and design possibilities, the company also presented its new edition 4.0 high definition surface treatment, which gives everroll® floor colours a much stronger, more vibrant appearance, even in backlight. As this surface treatment reduces irritating light reflection, whether from intensive lighting from above or floor-to-ceiling windows, it enhances the floor's sports functionality by making markings such as direction graphics, logos or training scenarios much easier to see.



everroll® crosstle elastic floor sheets are robust enough to provide the insulation and impact absorption required for dumbbell and kettlebell areas



Contacts for the UK and Ireland:

Your contacts for the United Kingdom and Ireland are John Maguire and Jamie Symons, whose experience and expertise will provide you with the best possible advice.

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Web: www.everroll.biz

A photograph of a gym floor covered in grey rubber flooring. In the foreground, two dumbbells with black weights and silver handles are lying on the floor. In the background, there are various gym machines and weights.

Regupol®

everroll® gym flooring

Anytime Fitness, Twickenham,
United Kingdom

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

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BSW GmbH
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A photograph of a gym floor. The main area is covered in grey rubber flooring, and a section on the right is covered in bright green artificial turf. Gym equipment is visible in the background.

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When you're running a gym you know that having the right flooring underpins the entire member experience. **Steph Eaves** asks the experts to advise on this expensive purchase

Paul Lipscombe
Escape Fitness

KNOW YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Whenever a club is looking at options for new flooring, the main thing to be considered in great detail is usage. It's essential that the forces and exertions that the flooring will need to tolerate are fully understood. That includes thinking about the users, the types of exercise that will be carried out in the area and also the equipment that will be used.

Just as important as the flooring itself is what's happening below it. A full site survey is essential in order to establish the type of subfloor that is in place, and whether any work is needed to upgrade this before the installation of the new gym flooring product can be carried out.

Floor failure, which can be very costly and hugely disruptive, most commonly results from poor subfloor preparation



The floor in a functional training zone has very particular needs

and incorrect product choice. Each flooring type reacts differently to the forces placed on it. Some products have the elasticity and shock absorption needed for plyometric workouts, others are suited for studio use, while some are suited to the demands of free weights.

By fully understanding the demands that will be placed on your new flooring and the environment in which it will be installed, it's possible to ensure the longevity and durability that is needed to give years of successful use, while also being easy to clean and maintain.

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GETTING INTERACTIVE

It's worthwhile looking carefully at opportunities to commercialise your gym floor space. For instance, floor markings can help to coordinate movement, map traffic for training spaces and encourage more people to do their workouts simultaneously. Flooring can even constitute

a training element in its own right.

Recently we've focused on ways to take flooring from being a passive to an active or even interactive element of a gym.

With the use of LED-enriched stations and pressure-sensitive floors and walls, we've taken the first step to converting a floor into an interactive element. We've also developed education and programming to convert this technology into a fitness experience in its own right.



LED stations can turn a floor into a standalone fitness experience

We've focused on ways to take flooring from being a passive to an active or even interactive element of a gym Steve Shaw, Pavigym

Paul Farrell Physical Company

ENVIRONMENTAL EXERCISE

When considering which flooring to use, one option is recycled rubber.

There are plenty of colour options and surface designs showing target zones, tracks and grids.

Correct subfloor preparation is essential to laying eco rubber flooring: rubber expands and contracts at different temperatures so the rubber must acclimatise within the building before it's laid. You also need a strong adhesive to hold it and to give it enough flex.

An eco choice shouldn't be a compromise – Ecore flooring is a genuine environmental choice, last year reusing over 86 million (of 90 million) pounds of truck tyres destined for landfill.



A studio or functional floor can be the most important part of a gym

Darren Wood Sport & Fitness Flooring

SAFETY AND COMFORT

We spend a significant amount of time considering the benefits of fitness equipment in our clubs, yet a studio or functional floor can be the most important piece of kit in the building.

To ensure the safety of members and to provide an effective performance space, consider the following factors:

- The level of 'energy restitution' determines the energy feedback members receive as their foot lands. If the impact dissipates completely, this leaves them feeling flat footed.
- The surface needs to provide the user with a good level of force reduction in order to reduce the risk of repetitive stress injury.
- How much the floor flexes will affect foot traction and comfort.
- The flooring must have the right grip – too much or too little can result in injuries. ►





The right flooring can help prevent the spread of bacteria and microorganisms



Nicholas Egan Gerflor

LASTING LUXURY

Health and fitness specifiers are typically more interested in a finished product that will last longer and work better, even if this might cost a little more up front.

Factors such as whole life-cycle costs, durability and maintenance requirements must be taken into account when making a decision.

Other factors include the need for multi-use flooring that facilitates different room uses, as well as having the right aesthetic appeal.

Another consideration is safety, including finishes that minimise the risk of friction burns and help prevent the spread of bacteria and microorganisms, with their related skin infections.

Luxury vinyl tiles and specialist, heavy-duty interlocking vinyl tiles can be the best solution. These are waterproof and come with a 10-year guarantee.

Rudy Fabiano Fabiano Designs

AESTHETIC AND PRACTICAL

The choice of flooring in fitness facilities requires expert selection, because most combine multiple programming spaces, which have different performance and safety criteria. It's also important to consider whether the look and feel of the product is appropriate to the image and identity of the gym.

With the rise of functional training, artificial turf has become popular inside our clubs, although traditional stone, ceramics and porcelain tiles still cover the bulk of public spaces, with recycled rubber being the go-to product in the fitness areas. It's unlikely that one type of flooring would be able to accommodate the needs of an entire facility.

In order of selection criteria: safety should come first, then performance, durability, cost and aesthetics. As designers, we enjoy the challenge of meeting criteria while maintaining the aesthetics that result in the user's elevated perception of the gym. ●



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A welcome change

Eastern Leisure Centre in Cardiff gets new state-of-the-art floors from Gerflor

The Eastern Leisure Centre in Cardiff had more than 250,000 users last year, but was in urgent need of modernisation.

A £6.5m makeover aimed to shatter old stereotypes about council leisure centres, and offer something that resembled a private fitness club. It's been a bold financial move that's paid healthy dividends for the local community.

OLYMPIC STANDARD

It was envisaged that the refit would encourage more people to use the facility, which now includes dedicated spin class spaces, a dance studio, improved changing facilities, a five-lane swimming pool and a fitness zone that's one of the biggest and best-equipped in the city. The equipment in the gym is the same as that used in Olympic training venues.

Councillor Peter Bradbury, cabinet member for community development, cooperatives and social enterprise told *Health Club Management*: "The modernisation of Eastern Leisure Centre has enjoyed strong support from both the community and elected councillors, so this multi-million-pound investment is welcome news."

A spokesperson for Active Cardiff said, "We're smashing apart the misconception that council-run leisure venues are somehow less well-equipped, or less prestigious, than those run by private enterprises."

"The refurbished leisure centre will be used and enjoyed by the local community for years to come

— Matthew Graves, Puma Floors Ltd



The centre now has a dedicated spin studio, along with Gerflor flooring

FINE FLOORING

The now refurbished 1600sq m leisure centre also includes an open reception area, along with a gym and soft play facilities. The project was also a perfect fit for international flooring and interiors specialist Gerflor.

Its high-end products Taralay Impression Control and Taraflex® Sport M Performance were specified in the original tender document, and the company eventually provided these to the appointed installers — Cardiff-based Puma Floors.

The Taralay Impression Control range was the winner of the 2016 CFJ/CFA product of the year category. A multi-purpose floor covering available in 2m sheet format with a Group T wear rating, it's designed to withstand heavy traffic and provide slip resistance.

The centre, which has high levels of sports and leisure traffic, also needed a top-performing sports floor to meet the rigorous demands placed on it. Taraflex® vinyl sports flooring from Gerflor had been used in many international and local sporting events and was the perfect solution.

Matthew Graves, commercial director of Puma Floors, said: "We'd definitely specify Gerflor products again and we know the refurbished building will be used and enjoyed by the community for years to come". ●



The Taralay Impression Control range can withstand heavy traffic

FIBO innovations

Missed FIBO 2017? The good news is Lauren Heath-Jones was there to spot the latest launches

For details, log onto www.fitness-kit.net and type the company name under 'keyword search'

WOODWAY DEBUTS FITBENCH

Billed as the meeting of form and fitness, Fitbench is a new innovative space-saving solution for gyms. Distributed by Woodway, the Fitbench is a multifunctional training bench. It features multiple storage points for dumbbells, kettlebells, resistance bands and medicine/slam balls, and has storage space for ropes, water bottles and users' personal items.

It also features weight accessories, anchor and attachment points and can be used by individual or multiple exercisers.

The bench is made from cold rolled steel and can be elevated for use in plyometric training. It also has built-in wheels and handles so it's easy to move.

Eric Weber, sales and marketing director of Woodway USA, says: "The Fitbench, integrated with our Woodway treadmills, is a perfect marriage for high intensity interval training (HIIT), and we've seen a significant amount of interest from the hotels, gyms and physical therapy clinics who have a limited amount of space and need a solution for functional training."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **WOODWAY**

Fitbench can be used for plyometric training



PHANTOM ATHLETICS SHOWCASES PHANTOM TRAINING MASK

The Phantom Training Mask (PTM) is an ergonomically designed respiratory training mask that claims to train breathing, in order to boost performance and power.

Unlike altitude training, which reduces oxygen levels, the PTM adds resistance to the breathing process, so the lungs have to work harder – taking deeper and more powerful breaths – to take in the same level of oxygen. Phantom claims this not only strengthens the respiratory system, but also enhances physical conditioning and increases training productivity.

The mask has a nylon cover that's designed to provide optimal airflow, and features the Phantom Regulation System (PRS), a patent pending system to encourage users to exceed their limitations, and an Xhale valve that is designed to ensure comfortable breathing.

The PRS system and Xhale valve are made from an odorless, hypoallergenic, medical silicone. The silicone moulds to the user's facial features to provide a secure and comfortable fit.

The PTM is suitable for use in all sports and athletic performance activities.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **PHANTOM ATHLETICS**



The PTM claims to train breathing to boost performance and power



FUNS-C FITNESS CONTAINER WINS TWO AWARDS

A new functional training system from Transatlantic Fitness won first place in two out of three categories at the FIBO Innovation Awards – the Jury and Private Visitor awards.

The FUNS-C is a versatile workout station in a container and was developed by FunsFitness founder Tobi Conrad in collaboration with the Department of Sports Medicine at the University of the German Army, Munich.

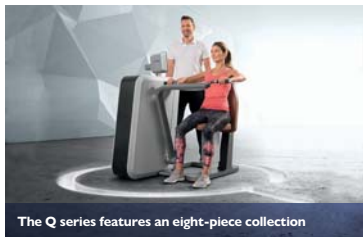
Designed as a mobile multi-user workout solution, the FUNS-C is a universal, multi-sport training station that can accommodate between 10 and 25 people. It features a chin up bar, anchor points for battle ropes and suspension training

ropes, a core bar and storage space for other equipment. It's made from stainless steel and is lockable, making it suitable for indoor and outdoor use.

Conrad says: "It was fun and challenging to combine functionality with design inside the container. I'm very excited about the great feedback."



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **TRANSATLANTIC FITNESS**



MILON'S Q SERIES HONOURED IN INNOVATION AWARDS

milon's Q series, a new range of high-tech training equipment, got the 'silver' in the Trade Visitor category at the FIBO 2017 Innovation Awards. The eight-piece collection consists of a back extension, abdominal crunch, chest press, crosstrainer, leg curl, leg extension, seated rowing machine and bike.

The collection features an intuitive user interface that uses milon CARE, cloud based software with gaming elements, designed to inspire and motivate users and boost their performance.

Users follow a theme-guided workout in which accurate strength measurements are taken to determine which training weight to use.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **MILON**

THE FIBO INNOVATION & TREND AWARDS 2017

TRADE VISITOR AWARD

- 1st** Independent Workout / Independent Workout
- 2nd** milon Q / milon industries GmbH
- 3rd** XTENSION FITNESS MTX ONE / XTENSION tFITNESS Wellcore GmbH

PRIVATE VISITOR AWARD

- 1st** FUNS-C / Transatlantic Fitness GmbH
- 2nd** VA SEVEN® Prime Bench / VA SEVEN

JURY AWARD

- 1st** FUNS-C / Transatlantic Fitness GmbH
- 2nd** 3D BODY TRACKING / BODYGEE AG
- 3rd** 4Active / CSE Entertainment Ltd

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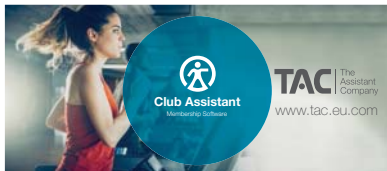
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Keeping fit for life gives huge benefits when it comes to mental health

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Tackling mental health

A report has found that having good cardiorespiratory fitness may cut the risk of death in men suffering from depression or anxiety by up to a half

Mental health and emotional disorders are often associated with a higher mortality risk. Now, a new study has found that having good cardiorespiratory fitness could help prevent early deaths among men who suffer from depression.

The study, led by Mei Sui of the University of South Carolina in Columbia, US, looked into a dataset collected by the Cooper Clinic in Dallas between 1987 and 2002. The Cooper Clinic conducted preventive health exams on more than 43,000 men during the 15-year period.

In particular, Sui and her team focused on the 5,240 men in the Cooper study who had been recorded as sufferers of "emotional distress" – such as depression, anxiety and a history of psychiatric or psychological counseling.

During the original study, the participants completed an extensive medical examination and were followed for all-cause mortality through to 2003. The cardiorespiratory fitness of participants was measured by them running on a treadmill until exhaustion.

REDUCING THE RISK OF DEATH

Using the data from the Cooper study, Sui's team found that men with at least moderate cardiovascular fitness were 46 per cent less likely to die of any cause during the study than those with the lowest recorded fitness levels. Those in the highest fitness group were 53 per cent less likely to die early.

The results in the final report, *Cardiorespiratory Fitness and All-Cause Mortality in Men With Emotional Distress*, led Sui and her team to conclude that, among men with emotional distress, higher CRF can be associated with a lower risk of dying, independent of other clinical mortality predictors.

Sui points out that as even moderate levels of fitness were associated with a lower risk of dying, prescribing exercise to those with mental health issues – especially depression and anxiety – could dramatically reduce early deaths.

"Our findings underscore the importance of promoting physical activity to maintain a healthy level of CRF in individuals with emotional distress,"

said Sui. She added that exercise could also help with other issues. "Medication to treat mental problems is not only expensive, but also comes with significant side effects such as weight gain.

"Identifying modifiable factors that are beneficial to those with emotional distress has important clinical and public health applications," said Sui.

"This significant strong inverse association between high levels of fitness and longevity in men with emotional distress is particularly interesting. Clearly, lifestyle behaviour interventions to increase fitness levels could help those with emotional distress."

The cost of mental health has increased dramatically in the past 20 years. In October 2016, the NHS released figures that showed that one in three adults (37 per cent) aged 16-74, with conditions such as anxiety or depression, surveyed in England, were accessing mental health treatment.

It is estimated that the NHS spent more than £11.7bn on mental health services in 2014-2015. ●

Cardiorespiratory Fitness and All-Cause Mortality in Men With Emotional Distress (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research); Sui X, Ott J Jr, Becofsky K, Lavie CJ, Erntsen L, Zhang J, Blair SN

Even moderate levels of fitness were associated with a lower risk of dying



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**Michelle Dand, Group Health & Fitness Manager,
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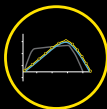


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