

health club management

JUNE 2018

No 258

Sebastian Lagree

The man behind
Meghan Markle's
favourite
workout **p66**

JUSTIN MUSGROVE

Bannatyne's CEO talks
growth and getting
into Europe **p36**

LES MILLS

Celebrating 50 years of passion for fitness **p56**

move**GB**

JOIN THE MOVEMENT A POWERFUL
MARKETING, SALES AND RETENTION
PLATFORM TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS
JOIN FOR **FREE** [MOVEGB.COM/PARTNERS](https://movegb.com/partners)





Proactive

A collaborative approach to leisure delivery

INVESTMENT | SUPPORT | EXPERTISE

It is not just the bricks and mortar of a building that are important. It's about building the foundations for better lives in the community...

01932 584 700

www.willmott-dixon.co.uk

very



ACTIVE
UPRISING

Proud Headline Sponsors at
Active Uprising 2018



WILLMOTT DIXON

SINCE 1852



**GLOBAL WELLNESS
SUMMIT 2018**

Thought Leadership: Fitness meets Wellness, on the Italian Coast

Be part of the world's most important conference on the
\$3.7 trillion global wellness economy
October 6-8, 2018 | Technogym Village in Italy

And do it while sipping cappuccino in the Wellness Valley

GLOBALWELLNESSSUMMIT.COM





Focus on property

While some savvy operators have cracked the formula for property development, the wider industry has no access to information about things like rent to income ratios. Better data would enable us to thrive as a sector

When it comes to driving financial success – whether for profit or social good – the industry has traditionally had a strong focus on sales, marketing and retention.

However, although these are vital parts of the mix, operators running some of the most successful fitness businesses have been quietly developing seriously impressive property teams and it's becoming clear this is giving them a significant commercial advantage.

The way real estate is handled in relation to the development of clubs and the management and refurbishment of assets is starting to define value in the market in ways not previously seen.

Yet very little is generally known about the impact of real estate on the sector – there are no widely available industry surveys which track rental costs or values, or look at profitability or asset value by location or by location type.

We don't have shared numbers about the best location types, or where the rent to income ratios are most favourable, nor is this being tracked over time to show changes.

Neither do we assess in any depth how refurbishment cycles impact on the bottom line or how co-location affects turnover and profitability. These are all things we need to know.

In this issue, we open a discussion about property in our Ask an Expert feature on page 30. We look at some of the ways leading operators are managing their portfolios and ask how the industry can continue to thrive, as competition for sites intensifies and rental values increase in prime locations.

A new report from Allegra Strategies, called *Project Fitness UK 2018*, gives insights into the direction the industry is going, showing a strong drift towards retail-related locations.

Allegra says the majority of new private sector facilities built since 2012 have been in shopping centres, mixed use schemes, on retail parks and on the high street and our experts agree the contraction of retail is proving beneficial to gym operators.

New clubs will open at the rate of well over 300 a year in the UK for the next five years and it seems clear that when growth in the UK starts to slow – if the terms of Brexit make it viable –



Some operators are getting great results in retail locations

Operators running some of the most successful fitness businesses have been quietly developing seriously impressive property teams

operators will look to Europe to keep up the momentum, and so we will need to start extending this knowledge into Europe too.

On page 42, we publish Deloitte and EuropeActive's latest numbers on the market, but again, the focus of this research is on membership and the number of locations. We'd like all industry analysts to start collecting data about rental values and property yields as well, so the best investment decisions can be made.

Liz Terry, editor
lizterry@leisuremedia.com
[@elizterry](https://twitter.com/elizterry)

I N C R E A S E
M E M B E R
A T T E N D A N C E
B Y 3 0 %

**Get 5-star cinematic fitness
in your club. Book a demo at**

lesmills.com/virtual



VIRTUAL



LES MILLS

CONTENTS

Uniting the world of fitness

JUNE 2018 No 258



ON THE COVER

56 Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Les Mills business



14 Louise Parker is opening in Harrods

05 Leader

13 Letters

Jenny Patrickson of Active IQ calls for collaboration, rather than competition, in the awarding organisation sector

14 HCM people Louise Parker

The fitness and diet guru, known for her six-week programme, takes her workout and wellness concept to Harrods

Idris Allan

Argos – recently acquired by Sainsbury's – is making a bid for the home fitness market and using social media influencers to target a younger audience

18 News

Xponential Fitness begins expansion in the UK; The Gym Group CEO, John Treharne, hands over the reins; and the UK fitness sector is worth £5bn

30 Ask an expert Get real

Steph Eaves digs into the challenges faced by operators around securing new sites in the current real estate market

36 Interview Justin Musgrove

Bannatyne is on a roll. Its CEO explains how creating "affordable luxury" has allowed the brand to grow and set its sights on extending into Europe

87 Inspirational flooring projects from around the world





74 Fontes and Wintour: turning knives into gyms



36 Bannatyne CEO Justin Musgrove on “affordable luxury”



66 Sebastian Lagree explains the Lagree Fitness Method



50 Asia is ripe for growth according to IHRSA

42 Growth study

The *European Health & Fitness Market Report* from EuropeActive and Deloitte finds David Lloyd Leisure is the most profitable operator in Europe

50 Asia Pacific

The latest Asia Pacific research from IHRSA and Deloitte shows significant growth potential for the fitness market in Asia, where penetration rates range widely from 0.15 to 15.3 per cent

56 Interview Les Mills 50th

Three generations of the Mills family talk to *HCM* to mark their 50 years of passion for fitness and wellbeing

66 Profile Sebastian Lagree

As a Lagree studio opens at the Nobu Hotel in London, the founder shares his vision of creating a better world for all through wellbeing and health

74 Steel Warriors

The police confiscate a ton of knives in London every month. Pia Fontes and Ben Wintour have set up Steel Warriors, a charity that re-forges them to make urban gyms for the community

81 Supplier showcase

Safe Space provides a luxury installation for Impulse Leisure, and FitQuest helps CityFit provide new insight for members

82 Events calendar

It's a busy time for events, with everything from Active Uprising to FIBO China and IHRSA/Fitness Brasil

87 Style & substance

Flooring is the foundation of a gym, both in look and feel. We take a look at recent projects that are making an impact

95 FIBO special Product Innovations

Lauren Heath-Jones brings you a bumper round-up of the newest products, which were all launched at FIBO 2018

100 HCM directory

Get connected to industry suppliers

health club management

MEET THE TEAM



EDITOR
Liz Terry

+44 (0)1462 431385



PUBLISHER
Jan Williams

+44 (0)1462 471909



MANAGING EDITOR
Steph Eaves

+44 (0)1462 471934



HEAD OF NEWS
Tom Walker

+44 (0)1462 431385

For email use: fullname@leisuremedia.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Joe Neary

+44 (0)1462 471910

Denise Adams

+44 (0)1462 471930

CIRCULATION

Michael Emmerson

+44 (0)1462 471932

DESIGN

Paul McLaughlin

+44 (0)1462 471933

PRODUCT EDITOR

Lauren Heath-Jones

+44 (0)1462 471922

FINANCE

Denise Adams

+44 (0)1462 471930

SALES SUPPORT

Tyler Landry

+44 (0)1462 471901

CREDIT CONTROL

Rebekah Scott

+44 (0)1462 733477

HEAD OF TECH

Michael Paramore

+44 (0)1462 471926

WEB TEAM

Dean Fox

+44 (0)1462 471900

Emma Harris

+44 (0)1462 471921

Tim Nash

+44 (0)1462 471917



CHOOSE HOW YOU READ HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT

PRINT

Health Club Management is available in print on subscription:
www.leisuresubs.com

DIGITAL

Read free on online and enjoy extra links and searchability:
www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/digital

PDF

A PDF edition is available to read offline at:
www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/pdf

OTHER RESOURCES FROM HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT

HCM HANDBOOK

www.healthclubhandbook.com
www.healthclubhandbook.com/pdf

HCM WEBSITE

healthclubmanagement.co.uk

LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

www.leisureopportunities.co.uk
www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/pdf
www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe

HCM EZINE,

INSTANT ALERTS & RSS

www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe

BUYER SEARCH ENGINE

www.fitness-kit.net



**health club
management**
Public Affairs Media Partner

©Cybertrek Ltd 2018 ISSN 1361-3510 (print) / 2397-2351 (online)

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Health Club Management is published 11 times a year by The Leisure Media Co Ltd, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1DJ, UK. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher The Leisure Media Co Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright holder, Cybertrek Ltd. Printed by Warners Midlands PLC. Distributed by Royal Mail Group Ltd and Whistl Ltd in the UK and Total Mail Ltd globally. ©Cybertrek Ltd 2017 ISSN 1361-3510 (print) / 2397-2351 (online).

To subscribe to Health Club Management, log on to www.leisuresubs.com or email subs@leisuremedia.com or call +44 (0)1462 471930.

Annual subscription rates are UK £45, Europe £57, rest of world £80, students (UK) £22.



ONE PLATFORM, UNLIMITED FITNESS



Studio



Functional



Single Station



Mobile



Integration

Start for
£ 129
per month

£ 0
down

The FitnessOnDemand™ platform delivers high quality fitness media and programming through a variety of channels, creating the ideal virtual fitness experience for any environment. Optimise your studio or functional training zone by instantly injecting hundreds of premium fitness classes into otherwise moderately utilised spaces—increasing class frequency, format, and quality.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

fitnessondemand247.co.uk | 44.20.3769.5747



Physical

STRENGTH



FUNCTIONAL



FLOORING



STUDIO



*COMPLETE
FITNESS
SOLUTIONS*

COMBAT



MIND BODY



SPORT



WELLNESS



Write to reply

Fuel the debate about issues and opportunities across the industry.

We'd love to hear from you – email: healthclub@leisuremedia.com



The needs of candidates should come first

Awarding organisations must focus on graduates and avoid misplaced competitive focus

Jenny Patrickson managing director, Active IQ

I feel it necessary, for the sake of transparency, to comment on your news piece 'YMCA becomes first awarding organisation to secure CIMSPA accreditations' as this headline and its associated story are potentially misleading.

While these three YMCA qualifications are 'endorsed' by CIMSPA, there has been a significant amount of collaborative work among all awarding organisations since 2015 to create a set of refreshed qualifications that are truly fit for purpose for exercise professionals.

Active IQ specifically engaged extensively with a diverse range of sector



Jenny Patrickson

employers back in 2015 to gather and incorporate their feedback into the development of our refreshed Level 3 PT and Level 2 Gym Instructing qualifications.

Our new L3 PT qualification launched in 2016 – ahead of

“There's been a significant amount of collaborative work among all awarding organisations since 2015 to create a set of refreshed qualifications that are truly fit for purpose for exercise professionals”

the game – but we wanted to avoid further delays in providing employers, learners, training providers and the sector with the updated qualifications that were required.

Learners and training providers have been working with our refreshed L3 PT qualification since 2017 and our Level 3 Diploma in PT qualification was endorsed by CIMSPA in March 2018, along with our L2

Certificate in Gym Instructing and combined L3 Diploma in Gym Instructing & Personal Training.

Active IQ welcomes more qualifications that meet CIMSPA professional standards, but the spotlight should be on graduates of these qualifications to establish effective outcomes, rather than a misplaced competitive focus. Collaboration, after all, is the way forward for us all.

PEOPLE

LOUISE PARKER

FOUNDER, THE LOUISE PARKER METHOD

“

I'm hugely excited to launch our new two-week Revive programme in Harrods. It's just the start of the unique programming we're going to deliver in The Wellness Clinic

”

Louise Parker, known for her six-week programme The Louise Parker Method, will deliver key elements of programming at the new Wellness Clinic in Harrods which opened at the end of May. Parker will be responsible for fitness and nutritional advice, along with her team of dietitians and fitness experts.

The new 10,500sq ft (975sq m) clinic is on the fourth floor of the Knightsbridge store and offers a wide range of specialist health and wellness services.

It has two personal training studios designed for one-to-one training, a private consultation room, photography studio featuring a Vectra 3D Scanner System, private showers, a relaxation room and 14 treatment rooms.

Full body workouts will be on offer with four people per class.

The space includes intravenous vitamin infusions from The Elixir Clinic, a full-body cryotherapy chamber and weekly clinics with chiropractor and posture specialist Dr Ben Carraway and acupuncturist Ross Barr.

Harrods has partnered with the PHI Clinic, which will offer aesthetic treatments for the face and body, ranging from injectable procedures to facial rejuvenation and body contouring.

The Wellness Clinic has an exclusive partnership with personalised skincare service Gen Identity, whose treatments involve a medical consultation, DNA test and a course of targeted skincare products.

Alongside the permanent treatment menu, the clinic will host a series of guest practitioners from local and

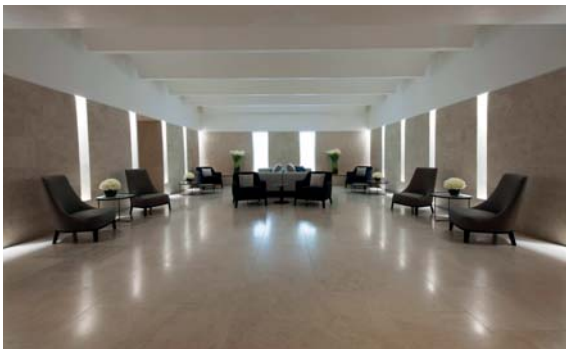


international practices, including New York Dermatology Group.

Dr Barbara Sturm will travel to London each quarter to offer Platelet-Rich Plasma treatments and MC1 Cream, a customised product that uses protein extracted from the client's own blood.

Parker has also developed a new two-week programme called Revive, which will integrate an array of treatments including four 90 minute personal training sessions, cryotherapy, a fitness VitaDrip infusion, an Oligoscan to determine mineral levels and oxidative stress, an osteopathic and physiotherapy consultation and dietary coaching.

The Wellness Clinic at Harrods will offer high-end treatments and workouts





Louise Parker has built a lifestyle fitness and nutrition business and is the author of *Lean for Life*



IDRIS ALLAN

SPORTS DIGITAL TRADING MANAGER, ARGOS



Argos aims to encourage the nation to adopt a healthier lifestyle through our products and education



► **Tell us about your Argos 'House of Fitness' event**

The House of Fitness was a collaborative effort between Fitbit, Reebok, USN and Argos to raise awareness with customers that Argos is a one-stop-shop for a wide range of fitness brands and products.

The event was a two-day in-store fitness experience in a home-like setting, with workout classes and routines that could easily be recreated at home.

The main goal was to provide those who enjoy or are interested in working out at home with the tools and knowledge to do so effectively.

The event came about because we'd received an insight report that made it clear some people are intimidated when visiting the gym, so to provide these types of people with an alternative, we wanted to combine the fitness knowledge and expertise that's available in a typical



Argos is taking on the fitness industry, targeting people who feel intimidated by the gym

gym with the comforting surroundings of a typical home.

Why were 'Petsercise classes' included?

Pets help boost our mood and energy on a daily basis, so we think it's a great idea to incorporate them into your workout when you're feeling a little reluctant to exercise.

Petsercise is a new trend taking the fitness industry by storm, particularly Doga – or yoga with your dog!

How was it received by customers?

All the exercise classes on offer sold out, with over 50 members of the public attending.

We also saw an uplift in visits to the fitness areas of our website over the event weekend, with people going online to buy fitness equipment.

This was mainly driven through the event trending on social media.



Social influencers such as Carly Rowena were key to the campaign, as they help demonstrate how easy it is to work out from home, therefore, it was a no-brainer to get them involved

■ ABOUT CARLY ROWENA

Carly Rowena is a personal trainer and fitness blogger who trains clients face to face and worldwide over Skype. She also teaches classes for consumer brands and runs retreats.

She did her training with Lifetime and Premier Training and name-checks them on her blog.

She says: "I like to think of myself as the girl next door who never

wants to have to turn down a meal just to stay in shape. I'm all about independence and finding a healthy and happy way to feel incredible in my own skin.

"There is no big secret to weight-loss, it's simply a lifestyle change. Diets don't work because they're temporary and only lead to bingeing or unhappiness.

"Small changes make big differences, you don't always have to remove things from your life to lose weight or be fitter, sometimes it's about swapping it for a healthier alternative or adding a new routine to your day. Anyone can succeed and be fitter, if they really want it."

To find out more, go to:
www.carlyrowena.com

How important were social media influencers to the campaign?

Social media influencers such as Carly Rowena were key, as they helped demonstrate how easy it is to work out from home, therefore, it was a no-brainer to get them involved.

Social media influencers also help us to target a different and wider audience and their social feeds offer inspiration and 'how to' guides in relation to key pieces of equipment, such as resistance bands, wearables or weights.

This makes people feel more confident to use them and also to buy them.

The influencers also helped us to target a younger audience, showing how Argos can help with fitness needs at every level.

What are Argos's ultimate plans for its fitness equipment offering?

We want to become the number one retailer for fitness, by helping customers to achieve their fitness goals.

We aim to encourage the nation to adopt a healthier lifestyle through our products and education.

Is the home market growing?

Customers have become increasingly interested in fitness and health, with people looking to educate themselves at home in both workouts and nutrition.

Yes, we've seen an increase in at-home fitness equipment sales over the last 12 months. This is down to customers becoming intimidated by the gym

environment while not feeling judged when working out at home.

Customers are also not looking to spend a fortune on equipment when they first get into keeping fit, so are looking for quality products at affordable prices.

Can gyms and home fitness exist side by side?

Absolutely. One day it may feel great to get up early and dash to the gym for a class. Other times, getting up early or going after a workout is the last thing you want, so it's great to have the option to do a workout at home.

What people want out of their exercise routine will also determine where they feel most comfortable – for some people, that's working out at home and for others that's the gym.

Xponential Fitness to begin European expansion in the UK

US-based Xponential Fitness has revealed plans to take its portfolio of brands global through a master franchise process.

The company owns a range of boutique franchise brands, including Club Pilates, indoor cycling concept CycleBar, indoor rowing business Row House and StretchLab, which offers personalised stretching.

Xponential will kick off its global expansion in the UK this year, following a master franchise agreement with entrepreneur Oliver Chipp.

Chipp expects to open at least 30 CycleBar studios in the UK over the next five years, with the first studio set to open in London's Battersea this month (June 2018).

Xponential Fitness is led by a team of industry veterans who have experience of building fitness brands internationally.

CEO Anthony Geisler developed LA Boxing into a successful boxing, kickboxing



What we're creating hasn't been done before and there's enormous consumer interest in boutique fitness

John Kersh



Xponential's CycleBar is launching in London this month

and mixed martial arts fitness concept, before selling it on.

John Kersh – who helped grow Anytime Fitness into a global business – has also joined as chief international development officer.

"What we're creating hasn't been done before and there's enormous consumer interest in boutique fitness across the globe," said Kersh.

More: http://lei.sr?a=k5M2B_H

Bupa launches evaluation scheme for businesses

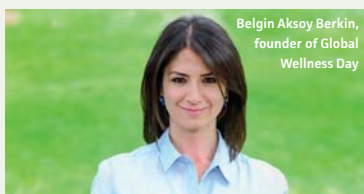
Bupa Global – the international insurance arm of healthcare giant Bupa – has teamed up with non-profit member organisation HERO to launch a new online service, designed to help businesses evaluate their health and wellbeing programmes.

The HERO International Scorecard will be marketed as an online tool for employers

and organisations, enabling them to create an inventory of health and wellbeing best practice in the workplace.

It will also allow employers to benchmark their performance and understand how they can instigate improvements in their fitness programmes.

More: http://lei.sr?a=f8T9y_H



Belgin Aksoy Berkin, founder of Global Wellness Day

Global Wellness Day: focus on kids

Global Wellness Day is an international celebration offering a range of free health and wellness activities to the public – will be celebrated this year in more than 4,000 locations in 100 countries on 9 June.

This year marks the seventh annual GWD, which has a mission of: "One day can

change your whole life". This year the event will focus on children's wellness.

Belgin Aksoy Berkin, founder of GWS, has developed a wellness curriculum for the children's project that can be implemented by schools in the 2018-2019 academic year.

More: http://lei.sr?a=P7A4W_H

Bupa is driving workplace wellbeing engagement



Finnish healthcare provider expands into fitness

Finnish private healthcare

provider Pihlajalinna has announced plans to expand into the health and fitness sector, following the acquisition of health club chain Forever.

Pihlajalinna will become the majority shareholder in Forever and will take over 10 of its 12 locations.

Founder Mikko Mustala remains as MD of the business following the deal.

In recent years, Forever has specialised in offering a diverse range of wellbeing services for adults looking to get fit and more active.

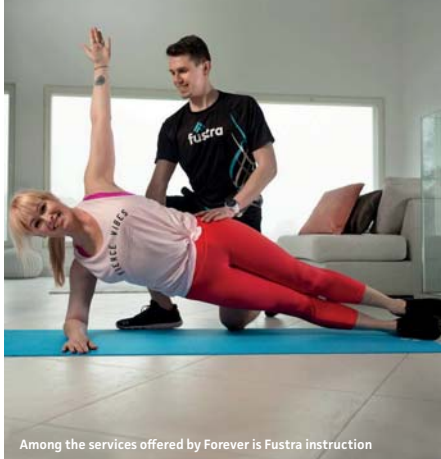
In addition to traditional gym spaces and group

exercise options, Forever offers personal trainer services and Fustra instruction, which is based on solving body issues with



Promoting wellbeing is definitely the future of healthcare

Joni Aaltonen



Among the services offered by Forever is Fustra instruction

postural interventions, movement, physiotherapy and nutrition coaching.

According to Joni Aaltonen, MD of Pihlajalinna, the move is a "logical step" towards providing a holistic preventative approach

to wellness. "Promoting wellbeing is definitely the future of healthcare," he said.

"The private health sector is increasingly moving towards a fixed-price model."

More: http://lei.sr?a=N5U2b_H

Virtuagym gets €6m investment to fund international growth

Virtuagym, provider of a cloud-based fitness software platform and mobile apps, has secured €6m (US\$7m, £5.3m) worth of funding to help fuel its international growth.

The company will use the Series B funding round, led by growth investor Endeit Capital, to innovate and

expand into new verticals, such as yoga studios, martial arts and dance studios.

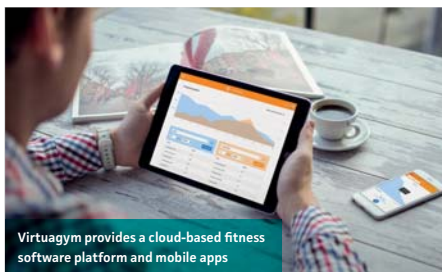
It will also look to use the funds to strengthen its position in the European and American markets.

Founded by two brothers, Paul and Hugo Braam, Virtuagym has grown from a single-room start-up to a



Technology is gaining momentum in the health and fitness sector

Hugo Braam



Virtuagym provides a cloud-based fitness software platform and mobile apps

business with more than 200 employees across offices in Amsterdam, The Netherlands and Medellín, Colombia.

"Technology is gaining momentum in the health and fitness industry," said Hugo Braam, Virtuagym CEO.

"As a front-runner in the space we've been promoting technology for over a decade now, and it's great to see the market finally shifting and starting to gain momentum."

More: http://lei.sr?a=E254w_H

John Treharne hands over the reins at The Gym Group

John Treharne, founder of The Gym Group, will step down from his role as CEO in September.

Treharne has led the company through its first 10 years, growing the portfolio



John's passion, vision and innovation have built a start-up into a market leader

Penny Hughes

from a single gym in Hounslow to 133 gyms today.

In a statement, the company's board said Treharne is stepping down to "leave more time for his family and personal interests".

"John will remain on the board as founder director, continuing to provide the benefit of his immense network and experience across the sector with a focus on nurturing entrepreneurial activity," the statement said.



Treharne built the company from scratch

Treharne will be replaced by Richard Darwin, the company's chief financial officer.

Darwin joined The Gym Group prior to the Company's IPO in 2015 and has worked with Treharne in delivering the group's rapid profit growth and site expansion. The company

has begun the process to appoint a new CFO.

"John's passion, vision and innovation have built a start-up into a market leader," said Penny Hughes, The Gym Group's chair.

More: http://lei.sr?a=T858K_H

Ray Algar: 'social impact of clubs needs to be consistently measured'

Ray Algar, managing director of business insight specialist Oxygen Consulting, has called for the fitness and leisure sectors to get better at understanding the data they hold and to utilise the social value they create.

"The fitness sector is driven by an altruistic purpose; public, private and third sector organisations all exist to serve and support the health and wellbeing of their customers," said Algar. "However, the metrics used to quantify business success, especially in the private sector, are predominantly financial – profit is very often a key measure. The wider social impact health clubs create needs to be consistently measured as well."



Algar has teamed up with Datahub to improve analytics

To help operators achieve this, Algar is teaming up with Datahub, a "virtual repository" for sports and leisure data.

The strategic partnership will look to assist both private and public sector fitness and wellness operators to more clearly define the social value generated through their venues and programmes.

More: http://lei.sr?a=D2v6j_H

Jeremy Hunt to headline ukactive National Summit 2018



Hunt will share his vision for the NHS

Health secretary Jeremy Hunt has been revealed as the headline speaker for ukactive's National Summit 2018. He is expected to use his appearance at the event – described by ukactive as a "landmark moment for the sector" – to share his vision on the role of physical activity in supporting the National Health Service. The National Summit will take place at the Queen Elizabeth II

Conference Centre in London on 12 September.

This year, the annual summit will move from plotting the role of physical activity as the "golden thread" in solving society's greatest challenges, to a focus on delivery – as part of ukactive's work to make 2018-19 a "year of action".

More: http://lei.sr?a=E4F7C_H

State of the industry: UK fitness sector is worth £5bn

The UK fitness market has continued to grow in size and value, with the number of gyms hitting 7,000 for the first time in history.

The 2018 *State of the UK Fitness Industry*

Report – published by the Leisure Database Company (LeisureDB) – estimates the fitness market's value at £5bn, an increase of 2.9 per cent.

According to the report, the market penetration rate



One in every seven Brits now has a gym membership



“
The period up to 2020 will remain the time for fitness to continue to break all barriers

David Minton

currently stands at 14.9 per cent, with one in every seven Brits – a total of 10 million people – now having some kind of gym membership.

The report also shows that the industry is still growing.

David Minton, director of LeisureDB said: “The period up to 2020 will remain the time for fitness to continue to break all barriers.”

More: http://lei.sr?a=5h4s7_H

Sector recruits entering industry with “unrealistic expectations”

A huge majority – 87 per cent – of fitness professionals working in the physical activity industry think new recruits are entering the sector with “unrealistic expectations”.

The revelation is among the findings of the *Raising the Bar Report 2018* published by Future Fit Training, which surveyed the breadth of the ukactive membership and interviewed executives and managers within the physical activity industry.

This year's report explores five major themes – training standards, skills gaps, work readiness of fitness professionals, working with young people and the way the sector engages with disabled people.

Among the findings is that the active leisure industry is “ready for change, willing to support the government's

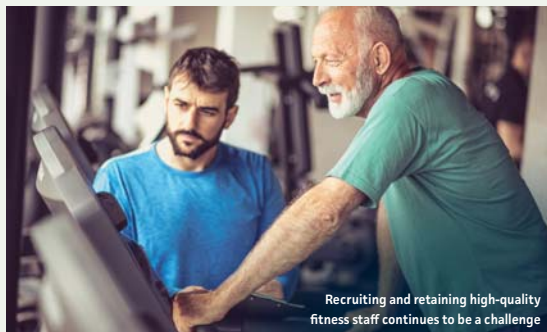
drive towards a healthier nation” and that there is a determination within the sector to raise the standard of skills across its workforce.

Recruiting and retaining high-quality fitness staff continues to be a consistent and recurring challenge faced

by employers in the sector. More than 80 per cent of respondents indicated it was not a process they found easy – and not one employer indicated that it was a process they found ‘very easy’.

As well as dealing with unrealistic expectations,

issues encountered by managers when looking to recruit fitness staff were candidates lacking the skills required to be successful (78 per cent of respondents) and candidates lacking any gym floor experience (70 per cent).
More: http://lei.sr?a=E8P8z_H



Recruiting and retaining high-quality fitness staff continues to be a challenge

Xercise4Less to expand after securing £42m of investment

Budget chain Xercise4Less has secured growth investment worth £42m from Swedish credit provider Proventus Capital Partners.

The funding will allow Xercise4Less to press forward with expansion plans, which will see the operator open another 10 gyms by the end of the year.

In total, the Leeds-based firm plans to open 40 gyms over the next two years and has a target of having 100 gyms by the end of 2020.

Launched in 2009, the company will open its 50th club in June this year and currently has more than 300,000 members – 30 per

cent of whom have never previously been members of health clubs.

Jon Wright, founder of Xercise4Less, said the growth capital will allow the firm to tap into the increasing demand for fitness.

"Unlike other budget operators we are not selling on price," Wright said. "We thrive on changing lives, and feel this ability to offer more than the consumer imagined they would receive is what will help us to continue disrupting the budget model and maintain the clear water between traditional and low-cost clubs."

Proventus Capital Partners specialises in medium-sized



Founder Jon Wright plans 10 new gyms by the end of 2018

companies and it has invested in a wide range of industries, including the leisure sector, where it had a significant stake in travel

giant Thomas Cook during its financial and strategic overhaul in 2013.

More: http://lei.sr?a=5K8U7_H

DW Fitness First aiming to be "largest sports participation brand"

Gym chain DW Fitness First has revealed its strategic vision to become the UK's largest sports participation brand.

Formed following DW Fitness' takeover of Fitness First's 62-strong UK portfolio in September 2016, the business

now boasts 120 gyms and 90 DW Sports-branded retail stores – a mix that the firm plans to utilise.

During 2018, the company will begin a programme of merging the health and fitness and retail sides of the

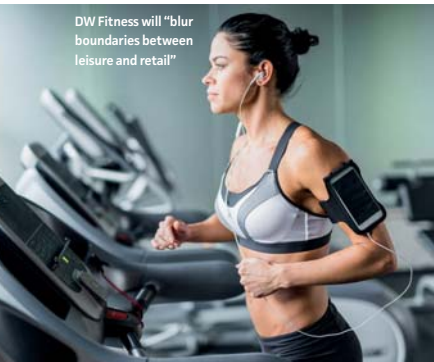


We're creating an end to end customer proposition that is unique to anything you'll find in retail or fitness

Martin Long



DW Fitness will "blur boundaries between leisure and retail"



business to create a "seamless customer experience".

A key focus will be to blur the boundaries between the leisure and retail elements and "bring the dynamism of the gym into stores" – while making sportswear shoppable in gyms.

It will result in the creation of new concept DW Sports stores, with softer and less masculine designs and layouts, featuring interactive elements such as Run Labs

where customers can get advice and have their gait analysed. In 2018 the group is also planning to launch pop up gym classes and workouts within its retail stores.

"We're creating an end to end customer proposition that is unique in relation to anything you'll find elsewhere in the retail and gym industry," said CEO Martin Long.

More: http://lei.sr?a=v3t9z_H

MATRIX

Strong • Smart • Beautiful



ACCELERATE THE WAY THEY TRAIN

Designed for not only group training but also athletic performance, the S-Force Performance Trainer builds fast-twitch muscle fiber essential to speed and power. Resistance increases the harder the athlete works, so even elite athletes are challenged in a way that develops more explosive starts.

S-FORCE
PERFORMANCE TRAINER



MatrixFitnessUK



MatrixFitnessUK



MatrixFitnessUK

matrixfitness.co.uk

'Huge growth' in number of people doing group exercise

The number of people doing group exercise increased by 3.76 million during 2017, according to research by Exercise Move Dance UK (EMD UK), the national governing body for group exercise.

The 2018 EMD UK Group Exercise National Survey, conducted in partnership with YouGov, shows that the

growth has been driven by a surge in the number of people aged 45 years and over joining group exercise classes.

The report shows that an additional 1.1 million people aged 45+ took part in weekly group exercise during 2017 when compared to 2016.

According to Ross Perriam, chief executive of EMD UK,



We're encouraged to see the positive steps in increasing accessibility

Ross Perriam



the report also shows that group exercise has become more inclusive – and is no longer limited to gym floors at premium health clubs.

"We're encouraged to see the

positive steps in increasing accessibility," he said. "Half of group exercise growth came from a C2DE audience."

More: http://lei.sr?a=3w2r6_H

Northfield Leisure Centre opens as part of £40m investment

The Northfield Leisure Centre in Birmingham opened to the public on 14 May, as part of Birmingham City Council's (BCC) £40m investment programme in the city's leisure centre stock.

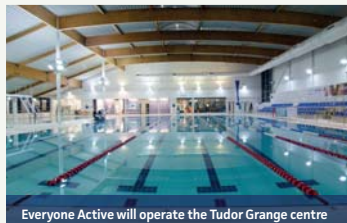
Facilities at the new £7.7m centre include a health club with a 75-station gym and group exercise studios, a 25m swimming pool and teaching pool and a community and teaching space.

It is the third leisure centre to open as part of the BCC's investment project and will be operated by Birmingham Community Leisure Trust (BCLT). Gym memberships range from £27.99/m to £35.50/m.

Designed by Calderpeel Architects, the centre – built by ISG Construction with BCLT overseeing the development – replaces a 1930s centre.

More: http://lei.sr?a=Z4v4J_H

Everyone Active adds two more councils to its portfolio



Leisure operator Everyone Active has been awarded two 10-year contracts to deliver services on behalf of local councils.

The company will manage the North Solihull Sports Centre and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre on behalf of Solihull Council.

The company has also secured a 10-year contract with Dacorum Borough Council to deliver its leisure services. In both deals Everyone Active has committed to investing in existing facilities.

More: http://lei.sr?a=7H2X3_H





ZERO-IMPACT. POWERFUL RESULTS.

For maximum impact, fuel your cardio floor with the unmatched zero-impact line-up from Octane Fitness. Challenge members with new ways to exercise and innovative HIIT workouts to spike motivation and generate greater results. Drive new sales and boost retention with exclusive equipment defined by breakthrough features, unsurpassed durability and exceptional performance. Zero in on Octane.

Zero Runner • XT-One • LateralX • XT4700 • XT3700 • xRide • AirDyneX



Octane
FITNESS

Contact your sales rep today to reserve your **FREE** demo!

©2017 All rights reserved by Octane Fitness.

OCTANEFITNESS.COM • 0203 463 8542

uksales@octanefitness.com

RSPH calls for GPs in gyms



Having GPs based in gyms – where they can work with exercise professionals to get people struggling with obesity more active – is among key recommendations made in a new report published jointly by the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) and ukactive.

Going the Distance: Exercise professionals in the wider public health workforce explores how fitness professionals could

support health services, saying overweight and obese people would be more likely to sign up to exercise if urged by their family doctor in a fitness centre.

Patients are also more likely to take up exercise if they're given specific advice – such as to go for a weekly swimming session or a dance class – and if access to activities is made easy.

More: http://lei.sr?a=M6z6P_H

PayAsUGym secures £6.5m

Online gym pass provider PayAsUGym has secured a £6.5m investment from Albion Capital to drive its expansion.

PayAsUGym enables gym users to access a network of health clubs, gyms, studio classes and spas on a pay-as-you-go basis. It also offers a premium reciprocal membership to the network, enabling customers to work out wherever they want.

The company has rapidly expanded its range of leisure venues since launch and now provides access to 2,700 sites.

According to COO and co-founder, Neil Harmsworth, the funding will be used to build the team and "further enhance the product" for both consumers and for participating gym operators.



“

Over the past two years the health and fitness industry has really started to embrace new ways to reach new customers

Neil Harmsworth

"Over the past 24 months the fitness industry has really started to embrace new ways to reach new customers," Harmsworth said.

More: http://lei.sr?a=H9V5c_H

Government publishes 'Fitness at Work' guidance for business

The government is encouraging businesses to get their staff more active, as part of efforts to make the workforce healthier and more productive.

The *Fitness at Work* guidance, produced in collaboration with ukactive,

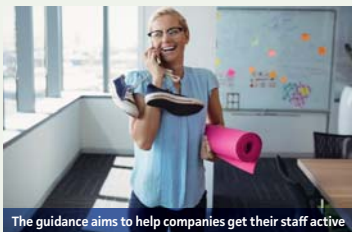
“

In a climate of ongoing cuts to health budgets, the challenges can't be tackled by the health workforce alone

Shirley Cramer

highlights how businesses can harness the tax system and encourage physical activity among their employees by making it cheaper and easier for them to work out.

It lists examples of how companies can set up a gym at a place of work or negotiate discounted membership rates at local gyms. The guidance also details how companies can utilise the Benefits in Kind and Making Good tax practices, which allow them to pass on the discounted rates they negotiate with gyms to staff.



The guidance aims to help companies get their staff active

"In a climate of ongoing cuts to public health budgets, the challenges currently facing the nation are too great to be tackled by the

core public health workforce alone," said Shirley Cramer, RSPH chief executive.

More: http://lei.sr?a=M6z6P_H



7-10 November 2018
Mövenpick Hotel
Mansour Eddahbi
Marrakech, Morocco

What do you get at SIBEC?

- Guaranteed pre-qualified audience of key decision makers
- Pre-set appointments with buyers of your choice
- Limited competition
- 2 full days of exceptional networking
- Unparalleled value for money
- High quality seminar programme

**Your best marketing
spend this year!**

For more information contact:
David Zarb Jenkins, Event Director
dzarbjenkins@questex.com
Tel: +356 99448862

www.sibec.eu.com

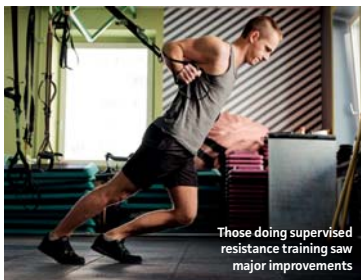
Supervised resistance training a 'key tool' for weight loss

New research has shown that those taking part in supervised resistance training benefit from vast improvements in strength, fitness and weight loss, in comparison to traditional training methods.

While general physical activity can have clear positive health impacts, it typically has less benefit in terms of body composition.

However, according to a study published in BMC Public

Health – called *Programming and supervision of resistance training leads to positive effects on strength and body composition: results from two randomised trials of community fitness programmes* – those who underwent structured and supervised resistance training programmes saw major improvements in both strength and body composition, including an average 2.5 per cent reduction in fat and 2.3kg in body mass.



Those doing supervised resistance training saw major improvements

The research was conducted by ukactive in partnership with Technogym, Myzone, Lifetime Training, Parkwood Leisure and Bexley Borough Council. Based on the findings, ukactive has

now called for a roll-out of exercise intervention programmes in GP surgeries across the country, to help reverse the obesity epidemic.

More: http://lei.sr?a=D9M6u_H

Regular exercise “keeps the heart young”

Those wanting to stop the main arteries in the body from stiffening up need to exercise at least four to five times each week, according to a new report.

Researchers at the Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine (IEEM) in Texas, US examined the effect of different doses of lifelong exercise (those who had exercised regularly for more than 25 years) on arterial stiffening – a hallmark of vascular aging in older adults.

The study – called *The Effect of Lifelong Exercise Frequency on Arterial Stiffness* – found that those who exercised four to five days a week had preserved “youthful vascular compliance”, especially in the large, central arteries.

Two or three exercise sessions a week were also beneficial – but only kept some

arteries healthy, the study of 100 people in their 60s found.

Researchers said any form of exercise reduces the risk of heart problems, but the right amount at the right time in life can reverse the ageing of the heart and blood vessels.

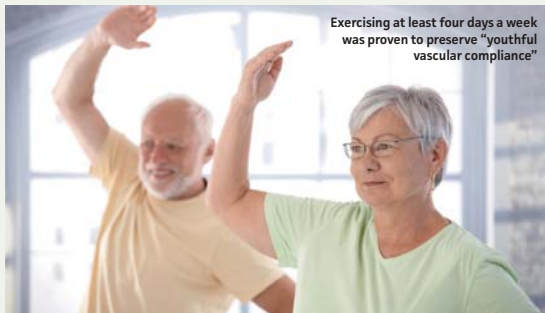
“Given the importance of vascular stiffening to health

and clinical outcomes with human aging, it's important to develop strategies to forestall age-related CV diseases,” said Dr Benjamin Levine, lead author from the IEEM.

Exercise is one approach. However, the minimal and/or optimal dose of training to preserve or improve

vascular structure and function with human aging has yet to be established. “The present findings constitute an important step by demonstrating the minimum amount of exercise required for vascular health,” he said.

More: http://lei.sr?a=T9t6u_H



Exercising at least four days a week was proven to preserve “youthful vascular compliance”

ukactive wants equal opportunities for kids' holiday-time activities

Save the children

Jack Shakespeare, head of ukactive Kids, argues for a collective approach to beating childhood inactivity – a trend that has consequences just as serious as childhood obesity

Modern life has engineered movement out of our days, and children are being hit hardest. While childhood obesity grabs the headlines, inactivity has an equally serious impact.

It's the fourth biggest risk factor for mortality globally, yet only half of seven-year-olds are meeting the recommended guidelines of 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity a day, making today's kids the most inactive generation ever.

We know activity habits formed in childhood carry through to adulthood, so failure to get kids moving has a devastating impact in the longer term.

Inactive children go on to become inactive adults – at risk from a multitude of preventable diseases that put pressure on the NHS.

We need to find ways to get children moving, and it must be a national priority.

The government is taking positive steps to address this issue and in January this year the Department for Education announced a new programme of research and pilots to tackle the issue of unhealthy school holidays.

These have been found to cause disproportionate harm to poorer pupils by

contributing to inactivity, malnutrition and poorer academic results.

This programme is a major step, but these efforts alone will not turn the tide. This is a multi-layered issue that needs a multi-faceted response. There's no silver bullet to reverse decades of inactivity.

Collaboration between our sector, schools and policymakers at national and local level will be vital to address the many factors that have led to a generation of inactive children.

NEW CONSULTATION

To bring together the views of these stakeholders – each with their own expertise – ukactive has begun a consultation to offer everyone the chance to have their say on the best ways to engage children in activity.

We're calling for evidence on what really works, from

those who know – parents, teachers, activity providers, policymakers, business leaders and, of course, the children themselves.

We'll aggregate the evidence to create a report that updates Generation Inactive (2015), offering solutions to shape policy and becoming the blueprint for a collective, evidence-based, approach.

Children's inactivity is one of the most urgent public health challenges we face. Only by coming together can we establish solutions and I invite anyone with a stake in our children's health to get involved.

Submit your views at ukactivekids.com



**healthclub
management**
Public Affairs Media Partner



ukactive has begun a consultation to offer everyone the chance to have their say on the best ways to engage children in activity

Jack Shakespeare





GET REAL



Finding the right location for a club is essential, but competition for prime locations is hot. **Steph Eaves** asks those in the know for advice on how to succeed in the current real estate market

Justin Rogers

Creative director, Ten Health and Fitness

For fitness providers, growth equals expansion – more sites in more locations.

But good properties are harder to find and afford than ever. Demand for real estate has risen hugely. As have rents and business rates, with prime London rents more than doubling in the last five years.

However, as a result of a massive increase in supply, a price-sensitive customer base and the rise of aggregators

such as ClassPass, membership and class rates haven't followed suit.



With margins tighter than ever as a result, the difference between success and failure comes down to one simple fundamental: the ability to find the right space at the right rent, and make sure it generates the right amount of revenue.

If it doesn't, everything else is irrelevant – no matter how cool your fit-out, how

insta-friendly your trainers or how engaged your customers.

There may be a correction in rents, but I don't think it'll come soon enough or be big enough for some operators.

Given the pressures property costs put on profitability, operators will have to be more agile and creative about how they use their sites to maintain margins.

That could include operators coming together to share space and facilities. It could involve adapting spaces that would otherwise be unused or hard to let.

And it could see providers opting out of London in favour of suburbs and regional cities, where property costs are lower but where they can still charge at or close to London prices.

Operators may opt out of London in favour of suburbs and regional cities where they can still charge London prices

Adam Bellamy

CFO, PureGym

In the last few years I've really seen a change, as landlords and developers have started to recognise the advantages of having a gym in their developments – gyms are attractive to consumers and can drive significant footfall, which in turn can attract other tenants.

Alongside value, convenience is the most important factor for people looking to join a gym. So it follows that our number one focus has to be on securing



the best sites with the right attributes for that location, such as free parking or access to public transport, making it easy for members to get there.

Secondly, a good site in the right location should stand the test of time, even when competition intensifies.

You're typically making a 10-15 year decision and investing a significant amount of capital, so it's worth spending time upfront understanding the locations where your business is most likely to succeed.

Another factor is that landlords and developers tend to think longer-term than most operators, keeping in mind the longevity of their investment. Clearly it makes a big difference to them if they can attract a market-leading tenant, with a strong property covenant.

One of our strengths is our ability to successfully

operate from a wide variety of property types, and the current challenges being faced by retailers present a great opportunity.


As property continues to come onto the market, there will be a shortage of retail tenants to fill it. We're in a great position to take advantage of that.

One of our strengths is our ability to successfully operate from a wide variety of property types, and the current challenges being faced by retailers present a great opportunity for us



Pure Gym has a strong covenant, putting it in an attractive position when it comes to securing property deals





DW Fitness First is developing four distinct property types and locations into gyms

► Martin Long

CEO, DW Fitness First

The right location is the key driver of success and building a multi-faceted location strategy is critical. This includes four models: out of town, town centre, shopping centre and the London model.

At DW Fitness First we ensure we hit all of these areas with our business planning across our leisure proposition – this has been fundamental to ensuring DW Fitness First is a unique and successful fitness chain within the sector.

We also have a distinct advantage in our group end-to-end proposition, which spans both the leisure and

retail markets. This in itself adds great insight and opportunity.



The major trend, of course, is the growth of the boutique offering in London. This has created rental inflation,

which is unlikely to be

sustainable. Space in the city is already expensive and operators compete with retail and office space, as well as residential.

Landlords ultimately achieve a better return from these areas, but leisure is an essential part of the economy and tenant mix.

Traditionally many of the London gym spaces are allocated to basement and now with the growth of

the boutiques we're seeing price pressure here as well, however, the boutique model is yet to be proven in London.

Finding the right locations for DW Fitness First hasn't been without challenges, however recent weaknesses within the property market, and the retail market specifically, have created opportunities.

The closures of Toys 'R' Us and BHS, for example, released surplus space, some of which can be repurposed for fitness.

At DW Fitness First we've taken advantage of what's happening across the broader property market, for example, in Bristol we created a new gym after retail chain B&Q reduced the size of its space. This is now one of our flagship gyms.

In short, having a detailed understanding of the prevailing property market combined with a robust multi-faceted location strategy is fundamental to building a successful fitness chain.

In Bristol we created a new gym after retail chain B&Q reduced the size of its space. This is now one of our flagship gyms and is incredibly successful



énergie Fitness is rolling out Thé Yard – its boutique franchise offering – and looking for suitable sites for franchisees

Stephen Rought-Whitta

Head of property, énergie Fitness

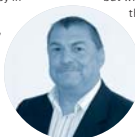
Suitable property will be a little easier to come by in the next few years.

By the same token, local authorities will be starting to feel the effects of more and more empty property and I can see obtaining D2 planning consents becoming less problematic, especially in areas which have – until now – been challenging.

By far the most important thing for me is to find property

that not only works at the outset but will also be sustainable throughout the whole term of the lease.

Not only is it important to ensure that the rent is sustainable, but also the location. To this end it is important to build good relationships with landlords, developers and agents – good local market knowledge is invaluable when it comes to finding sites.



Of huge importance is the physical nature of the space – when considering premises, it's important that the building is capable of being adapted to reflect future trends, for example, the growth in functional exercise and HIIT.

It's to the high street's detriment, but this industry's benefit, that retailers are shedding space at an alarming rate and landlords are realising that fitness industry tenants are a good prospect and certainly better than no tenant at all.

Retailers are shedding space at an alarming rate and landlords are realising that fitness industry tenants are a good prospect and certainly better than no tenant at all ▶



Barry's Bootcamp is part of the new boutique fitness sector that has emerged in recent years, changing the market

▶ Andrew Russell

Leisure Property Forum

To succeed in this leasing market, operators need to have a clear idea of what's important to the success of their business, their key requirements and the areas where they can be flexible.

The majority of the operators we deal with work on a leasing-based model, because buying freeholds would take up a lot of their capital, limit their opportunity to expand and would generally slow down their acquisition plans and roll-out of new units.

From a landlord's perspective, operators need to articulate what their fitness chain offers, over and above simply a secure income stream and a solution to empty space. It's critical operators have the ability to clearly

explain their concept, their competitive edge and USP. They need to demonstrate a deep understanding of their business – what makes it successful and what benefits it will bring to a landlord's development.

Ideally an operator has existing units for landlords to look at that have been successful, as it always helps if landlords can see the concept in the flesh to show that the operator can deliver what they promise.

To communicate these things, a clear, well laid-out landlord pack that explains the concept, business plan, funding, customer type and benefits that the club will bring to the location is essential. ●

It's critical that operators have the ability to clearly explain their concept, their competitive edge and USP

■ BACKGROUND BRIEFING

Andrew Russell talks us through recent gym property trends

Over the last 10 years,

we've witnessed a polarisation in the health and fitness market. At one end, there's been a rapid growth of the value fitness sector, led by The Gym Group and Pure Gym, and at the other there's been growth in the premium market, led

by David Lloyd, Virgin Active, etc. Meanwhile, the mid-market has been squeezed and we've seen operators such as LA Fitness and Fitness First suffer. However, over the last five years a new segment of the market has emerged – the boutique or specialist fitness sector, led by operators such as Frame, Kobox and Barry's Boot Camp, to name a few. These operators are much more flexible when it comes to the real estate space they can use. They can fit into units of around 5,000 sq ft or less and – importantly – they can afford to pay higher rents per square foot.



Andrew Russell,
LPF



NEOFLEX MADE BY **REPHOUSE**
FITNESS FLOORING

FOR

**CARDIO & SELECTORIZED EQUIPMENT AREAS,
FREEWEIGHT & OLYMPIC LIFTING ZONES,
CROSSFIT BOXES, FUNCTIONAL & AGILITY TRAINING,
GROUP EX & SPINNING STUDIOS,
AND SPRINT TRACKS**



FOR MORE INFORMATION

CALL +44 (0) 161 818 7377

EMAIL sales-europa@rephouse.com | [f](#) [@](#) [p](#) @rephouse

WWW.REPHOUSE.COM

JUSTIN MUSGROVE

A focus on 'affordable luxury' has seen The Bannatyne Group achieve its highest ever turnover and put European expansion in its sights. Kate Cracknell talks to the CEO

“We have a leadership team of 'non-health club origin', which means we have a very different take on where the industry should be going,” says Justin Musgrove, CEO of The Bannatyne Group. “Over recent years, we’ve all seen the market polarise. Our business faced the same question at the end of 2014: do we go up or down? For me there was only one answer: we had to go upmarket. But – and this is what makes our approach different – we did so at mid-market prices, charging on average £45 a month for membership. This is ultimately the secret of our success over the last few years.”

SPA AS A USP

Key to the shift upmarket has been a growing emphasis on spa – an area in which Musgrove has a wealth of expertise. Having joined Center Parcs in the late 80s, working in leisure and specialising in swimming pools, he switched his focus to spa 18 years ago.

He explains: “At the time, the Center Parcs spas were being developed under the Aqua Sana brand and I was on the operational leadership team, bringing those locations to life.

When the company floated, I was given the task of taking Aqua Sana to the high street. We were looking at locations in the UK and overseas, but things changed when Blackstone acquired Center Parcs, that plan was dropped and it was time for me to move on to pastures new.

“In 2007, I joined The Bannatyne Group to drive its newly acquired spa

business; Bannatyne had just acquired LivingWell from Hilton. At the time, the spa business had reasonable turnover but little profit. We saw this as an opportunity: my job was to drive that business and make it profitable.”

And the opportunity was duly realised, as Musgrove explains: “Our spas are now a £20m business and growing rapidly.

One factor driving that has been our online booking system,” says Musgrove, “Over 80 per cent of transactions are now done online, with total spa bookings up by around 25 per cent year-on-year.”

Interestingly, 92 per cent of Bannatyne’s spa business comes from non-members visiting on day spa packages. Of these, around 70 per cent book direct, with the



■ CLARICE HOUSE

Bannatyne is reinventing this hotel as a destination spa, closing the hotel operation in the process

Bannatyne bought Clarice House hotel in Bury St Edmonds in 2015 and in a bold move, the company is closing the hotel elements and relaunching the property as a destination spa. The hotel already has extensive leisure facilities.

All 13 bedrooms will be converted into relaxation spaces and thermal areas to complement the existing 23 treatment rooms.

Design work is by Jackson Design Associates, who also worked on the development of Center Parcs’ Aqua Sana spas.



“

Ours is a unique proposition.
We've created our own space in the UK market.
I believe we can do the same in Europe

Justin Musgrove

rest coming through third-party and gift card resellers such as Red Letter Days.

Spa guests, whether members or non-members, have access to spa areas that typically comprise between six and 12 treatment rooms, a dedicated manicure-pedicure area and a luxurious relaxation room. They also have access to the rest of the health club, including the gym, classes, all heat treatment areas, such as saunas and steamrooms and the café.

For those accustomed to the likes of Champney's and Center Parcs, the offering may not appear extensive, but as Musgrove explains: "We're a health club at the end of the day and our prices reflect that: non-members pay from £79 for a spa day for two people. For that, they can do a workout, perhaps try a pilates or yoga class, have a swim, treat themselves to some lunch in the club's café, then come in and have a wonderful

Elemis spa treatment followed by some downtime in our relaxation room.

"Some guests comment that they had a spa day, but it was in a health club environment, but that's OK, because that's exactly what we aim to do. We're a health club and this is our USP.

It's a different angle on spa, but it's proven to be very successful for us."

And the environment certainly isn't holding the business back from venturing ►

► into specialist areas such as Wellness for Cancer, as Musgrove explains: "In years gone by, we've had to turn people with cancer away. The advice from insurers was that we shouldn't take the risk."

"With all the new medical evidence coming out, I now believe this was bad advice. We're using a specialist provider to train as many of our people as possible in providing treatments for those either undergoing cancer therapy or in remission. There are so many people these days with cancer.... It isn't just about a commercial opportunity – it's also very much the right thing to do."

Returning to the original thread of conversation, Musgrove continues: "Of course, the fact that 92 per cent of our spa business comes from non-members represents a significant opportunity to grow the proportion of Bannatyne health club members who use our spas."

"Since 2007, we've grown our number of spas from 24 to 46 – we have them in two-thirds of our clubs – and it's a great USP. Yet at the moment, only 8 per cent of our business comes from members, in spite of the preferential rates."

"So we've launched a new wellness bundle. For £30 a month, members can choose either a one-hour or two 30-minute Elemis spa treatments each month – actual value £60. It will mean a bit of reduced income, but the big prize is that members will hopefully stay with us."

GOING PREMIUM

But spa hasn't been the only area of focus in taking the Bannatyne offering upmarket: £27m has been invested in the gyms over the last two years – in part thanks to a new strategy involving Bannatyne's partnership with Technogym.

Musgrove explains: "Since 2000, gyms have routinely had new equipment every four years, but now we're reviewing assets more intelligently, keeping some products longer but also being responsive in updating key areas more regularly to continually innovate and reflect members' interests."

"We've found members appreciate this more nimble approach of focusing investment where it makes a difference."

Most importantly, this has allowed us to put some of the CapEx into the infrastructure of the gym space: new lighting, flooring, décor and generally a refreshed space to work in.

Where previously we went 15 years between refurbishments, by which time things looked dated, we'll now be able to have a major gym floor refit every seven years.

"And the real beauty is that, with a third of our gym floor now dedicated to

functional training, we have very versatile space at our disposal. If there's a trend for, let's say, trampolining or pole dancing, we have a flexible model that allows for this space to be swapped out at relatively low cost. That keeps us current."

Also keeping the offering current are a number of other fitness innovations. These include Speedflex studios, which have been launched at 10 locations since January 2017. "In our Darlington club – which is where we do our experimenting, as it's right next to HQ – we run three or four Speedflex classes a day and they're included in the membership," says Musgrove. "Occupancy is in the high 90 per cent and we're getting fabulous feedback and great repeat usage."

HATTON BOXING PARTNERSHIP

"We also introduced group training in partnership with Hatton Boxing this month," he says. It's a 10-week programme for a maximum of 12 people, priced at £250 per person. This includes 10 one-hour training sessions, InBody assessments and also

£190-worth of Hatton merchandise: boxing gloves, pads, T-shirt and hoodie. They train together and it's all about getting results."

Musgrove continues: "It isn't just about the gym floor though. We're also looking at everything else in the club, from the changing rooms to the layouts and from the systems to the brands we partner with."

"For example, we've improved our café, partnering with Starbucks and making sure the food is healthy and convenient – freshly baked jacket potatoes and so on."

"These aren't headline-grabbers, but they're core improvements. We're looking to innovate across the whole business and get every single part of it ship-shape over the next two years."

"That's really important, because we've already seen how high street retailers are losing out to online operators. If we're not careful, this will start impacting fitness as well, with people doing things at home rather than in the gym. We don't see this as a major threat but we can't be complacent, so our key focus for the next two years is on creating an experience



A wellness bundle for gym members will give monthly treatments

■ THE BANNATYNE GROUP IN NUMBERS

£117.6m

Turnover at year-end 2017

£45

Average monthly membership

£14.3m

Pre-tax profits (+ 57%)

211,715

Number of members

£16.5m

Spa revenue (+ 13%)

71

health clubs

47

spas

4

hotels



Bannatyne has worked with Technogym to refresh the gym floor and make it more member-centric

“ We’ve launched a wellness bundle. For £30 a month, members can choose either a one-hour or two 30-minute Elemis spa treatments each month – actual value £60. The big prize is members will stay with us

culture. How do we make the experience at the club a social one – something members can’t afford to be without?

“We recognise there’s a need to help members stay active while they’re away from the club, so we’re working on an app whereby they have a virtual personal trainer on their phone and can train at home. We know if they get results and we’ve helped them do that, they’re more likely to stay with us.

“But for us, the key to success in this competitive landscape is making sure people attend regularly. Health clubs used to make money off the back of people not turning up, but we want to encourage people to come, not only because attendance drives ‘stickiness’ – the bond people feel to our clubs – but also because we get the secondary spend – the spa treatments, coffee sales and so on.

“In turn, this secondary spend gives us great data to understand members, because people are paying cashlessly using their Bannatyne 360 wristband. This is used both for access and payment, so

we have a whole new level of intelligence around member behaviour and can refine our offering accordingly.”

STAFF AS AMBASSADORS

Significant investment is also going into staff training, as Musgrove explains: “I believe we have a responsibility to improve the basic standards of fitness staff. We have Lifetime Training working with us and we’ve just recruited two of our best fitness managers to be on the road, dedicated to training and providing good programming for our teams.

“We want to make sure staff are fit too. That might sound daft, but there are so many fitness advisors who don’t practise what they preach. We want to make sure we have ambassadors on the gym floor – people who live and breathe fitness and who will give the right education to our members.”

He continues: “In terms of the member journey, we’re shifting our efforts from the back end – reactive interventions when a member says they want to leave

– to the front end, making sure people get a great induction and a lot of contact with us in the first 12 weeks. That’s already paying dividends.

“We’re also focusing on customer experience training, learning how to build experiences and relationships and how to empower people. This is being applied across the board – everyone in the club can add to the member experience – I believe some of the most important people in a health club are members of the cleaning team. They’re often the ones who talk to members every day.

“But the thing I’ve really learned is that staff need to understand what’s in it for them. Why should they interact with members and make them feel special? And the answer is this: if you’re looking for a career, the people who progress are those who make the effort to give great service and great experiences. They get talked about by the member, they get referred, they get great mystery shop audits, so they’re the people we invest in and fast-track through our programmes.” ▶



A new Capex strategy means Bannatyne will be more nimble in responding to exercise trends and innovations

► The obvious area we haven't yet touched on is hotels – a division of the company previously identified as a growth area for Bannatyne.

"When we bought hotels in the past, we generally got very good deals and were either able to add an integrated health club and spa, or the hotel was close to one of our clubs," says Musgrove. "The synergies are clear between the

three areas of our business and all our hotels are profitable.

"However, we're not looking to ramp up this area. Hotels are challenging, especially when you only have four, as we do. They take disproportionate effort compared to running gyms and spas.

"For example, the size of our health club estate means clubs aren't too far apart, so if we lose a GM, it's easy

to support that club. Our hotels, by contrast, are very spread out and it's difficult to attract the right employees.

"We have two choices: either we scale up and get to 10 or 20 hotels, or we stay where we are. For now, our strategy is the latter. We have no plans in the short term to dispose of our hotels, but equally we don't intend to grow the division. Our focus is on health clubs and spas."

Indeed, a fifth hotel – Clarice House in Bury St Edmonds, acquired in 2015 – is being converted into a destination spa, with its 13 bedrooms becoming "fantastically innovative relaxation spaces and thermal areas to complement the 23-treatment rooms."

WELLNESS FOR CANCER

Bannatyne is working with Wellness for Cancer founder and CEO, Julie Bach, to deliver specialist training to spa therapists, enabling them to deliver treatments safely to people who have been touched by cancer, whenever it's medically approved to do so

Wellness for Cancer is creating a global movement to champion evidence-based integrative therapies, including such things as massage, skin health and beauty, mindfulness, meditation and yoga.

The organisation has trained professionals in 25 countries and growing.

Wellness for Cancer works to raise awareness within the health and fitness, wellbeing and wellness industries in relation to personalised care for everyone, as well as developing scaleable training and conducting and sharing evidence-based research and guidelines.

Find out more: www.wellnessforcancer.com



Julie Bach, founder, Wellness for Cancer

HEADING INTO EUROPE

Plans for the health club division include what Musgrove calls "careful" growth: "In the last three years, we've grown from 61 to 71 clubs," he says. "We'd consider further acquisitions but I expect growth over the next 12–24 months to be driven by the maturing of existing businesses.

"We recognise it's getting harder to find properties in the UK and within five years, I'd like to think we'll be entering Europe. I believe our 'affordable luxury' proposition would translate very well into markets like Germany, Holland and Belgium, which are focused on low-cost and value.

"Ours is a unique proposition. We've created our own space in the UK market. I believe we can do the same in Europe." ●



Embrace
Technology

Your customers
will love you for it!



Now Introducing

Myzone Virtual Classes

The only system in the world with full Myzone feedback integration.

Functional Prompts

Eliminating the need for instructors to use white boards.

Private Messaging

Communicate privately with clients via the MZChat feature within the Myzone app.

©Myzone™ 2017. All Rights Reserved.
UK: +44(0)115 777 3333 | Learn more at
myzone.org or info@myzone.org



Myzone app is available on



GROWTH STUDY

David Lloyd Leisure takes the top spot for revenues in Europe, according to the European Health & Fitness Market Report 2018 from EuropeActive and Deloitte



Health and fitness offerings continue to attract more and more Europeans according to the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2018* by EuropeActive and Deloitte.

Four years ago, EuropeActive adopted a goal of achieving 80 million members of European clubs by 2025 – with about 46 million members reported at the time.

The industry remains on track to reach this target and Deloitte found total

membership within the EU, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine increased by 4.0 per cent in 2017 to about 60 million at the end of the year.

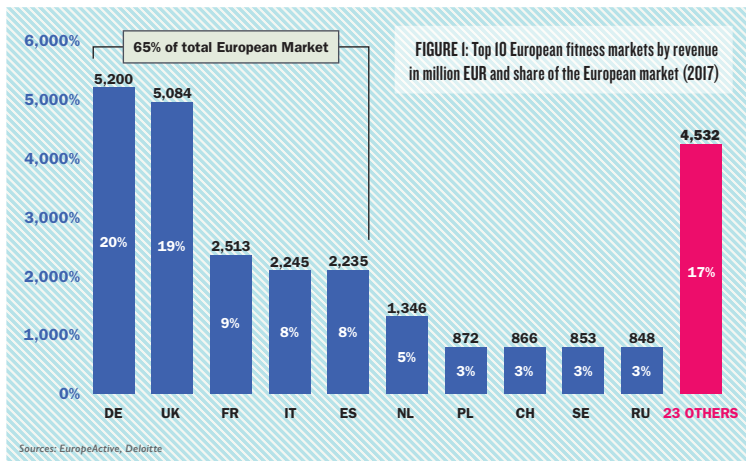
In terms of market size, Europe continues to be the world's largest market, with total revenues of €26.6 billion in 2017, ahead of the USA at €24.9 billion in 2016 (*IHRSA Global Report*).

At constant foreign currency exchange rates, the European market size increased by 3.8 per cent in 2017 compared to

2016, largely driven by strong growth in the UK market of +6.8 per cent.

At actual foreign currency exchange rates, year-on-year growth in Euros amounted to 1.9 per cent, due to negative exchange rate effects.

While the low-cost segment continues to grow in most markets, there are also an increasing number of, premium-priced boutique fitness clubs and growth in offerings such as functional fitness, personal training and small group training.





Boutique operators such as Frame are starting to make their presence felt

These are some of the main findings of the Deloitte report, which was presented at the European Health and Fitness Forum in Cologne in April.

McFIT GROUP AND BASIC-FIT

"The importance and popularity of health and fitness continues to grow throughout Europe and the stationary fitness market meets this demand with innovative concepts and an increasingly dense network of clubs," explains Karsten Hollasch, partner and head of consumer business at Deloitte.

"The leading players continue to drive market growth, as evidenced by the fact that the 30 largest operators managed to increase their membership by 9.5 per cent to 14.1 million. However, many smaller chains and independent fitness club operators can distinguish themselves with excellent service and individual customer support."

Among the leading operators, German discount chain McFIT Group retained its top position in terms of membership, with an estimated 1.73 million members, an increase of 110,000 over the previous year.



The leading players continue to drive market growth, as evidenced by the fact that the 30 largest operators managed to increase their membership by 9.5 per cent to 14.1 million

Karsten Hollasch



The total number of McFIT-branded clubs increased by six from 241 to 247, the group also operates 15 clubs under the High5 brand and 18 under the John Reed brand, following 12 openings in 2017.

John Reed, which was launched in 2016, has a 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 €25 to €40.

After expanding the John Reed concept to Budapest and the Prague in 2017, the company plans to enter the Swiss market in 2018, with a John Reed in Zurich.

In addition, the group's North American subsidiary 1UP, is expected to open two clubs in Los Angeles and San Francisco by the middle of 2019.

Ranking second in size is Netherlands-based low-cost chain Basic-Fit with 1.52 million members, which generated by far the highest organic membership growth of all operators with 310,000 additional members. This was largely due to the opening of 87 clubs in France.

British low-cost operator Pure Gym ranks third after increasing its



McFIT remains the biggest operator when measured by membership numbers

- membership by 103,000 to 923,000 in 2017. In February 2018, the Leeds-based company, which was acquired by North American private equity firm Leonard Green & Partners in November 2017, became the third European fitness operator to reach 1 million members.

Seven of the top 10 operators by membership can be considered low-cost operators. Following the three market leaders are German franchise operator Clever Fit (fourth), UK-based The Gym Group (fifth), German up-and-comer

FitX (eighth) and the Danish market leader, Fitness World (ninth).

Two other top 10 operators – Health & Fitness Nordic and Migros Group – have a low-cost brand in their portfolios.

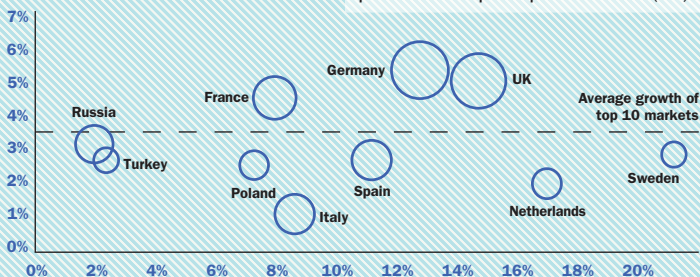
DLL IS REVENUE LEADER

While five low-cost operators (McFIT Group, Basic-Fit, Pure Gym, Fitness World and Clever Fit) also rank among the top 10 in terms of revenue, the UK-based premium operator David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) tops the

ranking with revenues of €483 million. DLL took the lead from fellow premium operator Virgin Active, from whom it acquired 14 clubs in the UK in June 2017.

In addition, DLL expanded its international presence in 2017 with the opening of a second Spanish club in Madrid in February, as well as the acquisition of the Malaspina Sporting Club in Milan. At the end of 2017, DLL operated 112 clubs in six countries – including 99 clubs in the UK – with a total of 580,000 members.

Membership growth



Note: Bubble size represents total membership as of 2017
Sources: EuropeActive, Deloitte



UK operator Pure Gym was bought by US private equity firm, Leonard Green & Partners



The major acquisitions undertaken by Pure Gym, David Lloyd Leisure, Migros and Virgin Active are just some examples of recent mergers and acquisitions. 2017 saw the highest number of M&A deals since the report began

Ranking second in Europe with revenues of €388 million is the Swiss fitness conglomerate and social enterprise, Migros Group.

At the end of 2017, the Migros cooperatives operated 311 health and fitness facilities with 466,000 members in five different countries.

In Switzerland, Migros Group expanded its market-leading position in May 2017, with the acquisition of Silhouette Wellness (22 gyms under two brands). At year-end, Migros Group had roughly 230,000 members across 123 clubs under twelve different brands in Switzerland, of which 98 were part of the Migros FitnessCard network.

The Silhouette clubs will be re-branded and join the network in 2018 as well. Notably, Migros Group entered

the low-cost market in 2017, with the launch of its "Only Fitness" brand in the Swiss capital of Bern.

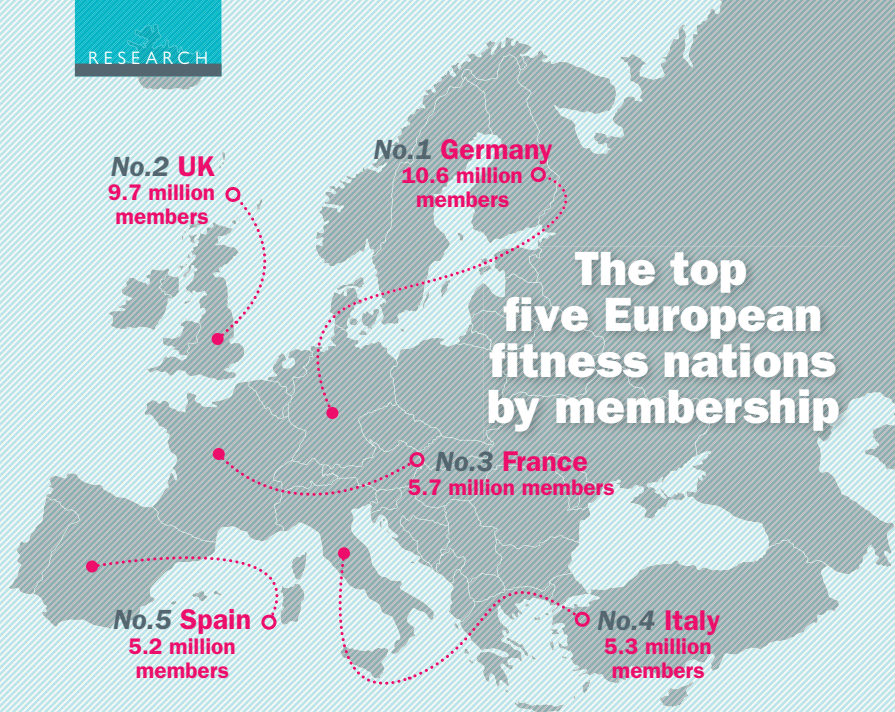
Meanwhile, Virgin Active dropped to third place in the revenue ranking with estimated revenues of €356 million following the transaction with DLL in the UK, as well as the sale of its entire Iberian business (eight clubs in Spain and four clubs in Portugal) to Holmes Place in October 2017.

At the end of 2017, Virgin Active still operated 76 clubs in Europe – 43 in the UK and 33 in Italy. However, the company remains one of the largest chains in the global fitness industry with about 1.4 million members and more than 230 clubs across eight countries in Europe, Southeast Asia, Southern Africa and Australia, according to public records.

The major acquisitions undertaken by Pure Gym, David Lloyd Leisure, Migros and Virgin Active are just some examples of recent mergers and acquisitions in the European health and fitness market.

In fact, 20 major M&A deals were recorded in 2017, the highest number since the *European Health and Fitness Market Report* has been published and an increase of three transactions when compared to the previous year.

"The consistently high number of mergers and acquisitions underlines the notion that health and fitness remains a highly attractive sector for strategic and financial investors alike," says Karsten Hollasch. "By supporting the expansion of fitness operators, these investors also help the health and fitness industry to achieve further growth." ►



► With regards to investor types, twelve of the 20 transactions involved a sale to a strategic investor, ie, another market participant. In addition, six businesses were sold to financial investors, indicating the interest of financial investors in the fitness industry, while one company was listed on the stock market (Actic Group at Nasdaq Stockholm) and one changed hands between private investors.

The large number of transactions involving the movement of assets from founders to strategic investors indicates an increasing market consolidation. However, consolidation in the operator market remains low compared to the commercial fitness equipment market, where the four leading companies – Life Fitness, Technogym, Johnson Health Tech and Precor – account for an estimated 72 per cent of global and 85 per cent of European commercial equipment sales.

GERMANY IS BIGGEST MARKET

With a membership growth of 5.3 per cent to 10.6 million members, Germany strengthened its position as the country



2017 was another year of strong growth in terms of both membership and market value. This shows our sector remains highly attractive to consumers

Herman Rutgers



with the highest membership ahead of the UK (9.7 million), France (5.7 million), Italy (5.3 million) and Spain (5.2 million). At the same time, Germany took over first place in terms of revenue for the first time in 2017, with total revenues of €5.2 billion according to research conducted by DSSV, DHfPG and Deloitte. However, this was due to negative exchange rate effects in the United Kingdom, as the UK market grew by 6.8 per cent at constant currency compared to a 3.0 per cent growth in the German fitness industry.

Together, the top five countries represent nearly two thirds of the entire European market in terms of both membership and revenues. With penetration rates (ratio of the number of fitness club members to the total population) of about 8-15 per cent, these countries generally offer further market growth potential and are expected to be major drivers towards 80 million total members in Europe by 2025. While Sweden (21.4 per cent), Norway (20.9 per cent), Denmark (18.3 per cent) and



Virgin Active reduced its ranking in Europe, but remains a huge global player

the Netherlands (17.0 per cent) have the highest ratio of fitness club members relative to the total population, Ukraine (2.6 per cent), Turkey (2.4 per cent) and Russia (2.0 per cent) have relatively low penetration rates, which could – in combination with their large populations – indicate potential for future growth.

"Further growth in the fitness market will be driven by favourable macro-trends such as increasing health awareness, but even more importantly by innovative fitness concepts and business models that meet customer needs," explains Karsten Hollasch. "The definition of the fitness industry as a purely stationary fitness market is over: existing fitness concepts are being augmented by digital offerings and new market participants are developing entirely new, purely digital concepts."

Thus, technological innovations such as mobile fitness applications, wearable tracking devices and online gyms, as well as offline activities like outdoor group workouts, provide opportunities to be physically active outside a brick-and-mortar gym and continue to gain

popularity in many European markets.

While these offerings might be considered a threat by some fitness club operators, many traditional fitness providers also see opportunities in these trends and have already started to incorporate non-stationary concepts into their own business models.

With regard to EuropeActive's ambitious goal of 80 million members by

2025, Herman Rutgers, board member at EuropeActive and co-author of the report, remains highly optimistic, saying: "2017 was another year of strong growth in both membership and market value. This shows the products and services of our sector remain highly attractive to consumers across Europe and makes us confident of reaching the industry goal of 80 million members by 2025." ●

■ GET THE REPORT

● A hard copy or digital version of the **Health & Fitness Market Report 2018** by Deloitte and EuropeActive can be purchased via the EuropeActive website at www.europeactive.eu

The website also lists all other available publications from the organisation.

Prices: €149 for EuropeActive members, €299 for non-members plus P&P



GET METABOLIC FIT

eGym has developed a programme specifically designed to combat diabetes, giving operators the perfect way to attract and assist this segment of the population

Leading developer of smart fitness equipment eGym has launched a programme designed to combat diabetes, giving operators the perfect way to attract and assist this segment of the population.

Metabolic Fit is a training programme proven to regulate blood glucose levels, enabling operators to provide bespoke, effective, automated training programmes to people with type 2 diabetes on a mass scale.

Diabetes affects more than 3.7 million people in the UK, with a further 1 million undiagnosed cases. One in every 16 people suffers from the condition and it's predicted by 2025, the number of people

with diabetes in the UK will rise to over 5 million. Currently, 10 per cent of the NHS budget is spent on the treatment of this condition and unless changes are made, this figure is set to rise.*

*Statistics provided by diabetes.co.uk

WIDENING THE MARKET

Most operators are focused on servicing the 15 per cent of the population who already own a membership and are potentially looking to move gyms. This leaves 85 per cent of the market largely untapped. Metabolic Fit aids operators who want to support a wider segment of the population through the provision

of a scientifically proven, automated programme, developed specifically for a demographic group with a diagnosed medical condition. This new software advancement is a prime example of how the physical activity sector can work alongside the health sector to achieve patient-centred outcomes.

Every member needs to be prescribed an individualised programme to progress them quickly and effectively towards their goals. This is a challenge in itself but add to this individuals with diagnosed health conditions and the prescription of an exercise programme becomes even more complicated and challenging.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

eGym partnered with the University of Leipzig to conduct a study to measure the impact of its Metabolic Fit programme on a group of type 2 diabetes patients. Here's what they discovered

Subjects taking part in the study trained on the eGym strength circuit at least once a week for six months, following the automated, prescribed programme.

Researchers reported a significant correlation between the training and a reduction in blood glucose (HbA1c) levels.

At the end of the six months, all participants experienced a reduction in blood pressure and a decrease in hip and waist circumference measurements – both indicators of an improvement in their long-term health. Nine of those participants experienced such a reduction in blood glucose that they were no longer clinically classified as diabetic.

Speaking about the development of Metabolic Fit, eGym CEO, Philipp Roesch-Schlenderer, says: "Our goal has always been to develop a comprehensive, optimally connected, product portfolio that exploits the full potential of digitalisation, creating a gym for everyone and offering our operator partners a sustainable future."

"The introduction of Metabolic Fit enables gyms to effectively support a growing percentage of the population who have specific long-term health conditions, widening the potential market for operators and closing the gap between the health and physical activity sectors. We're very excited to be offering this to the market and look forward to our continued commitment to supporting a healthier, more active population."



The study found that eGym circuit training resulted in health improvements for type 2 diabetes patients

*Statistics provided by diabetes.co.uk



Every member needs to be prescribed an individual programme to progress them quickly

"The eGym intelligent Metabolic Fit system has been proven to reverse the effects of type 2 diabetes in users in 39 per cent of cases"

Metabolic Fit makes it possible for trainers to support a wider segment of the population without medical training.

The new programme appears under the 'Health' training goal option on eGym strength equipment and applies all the benefits of eGym's well-established intelligent training system.

Periodisation and regular strength tests are automated to ensure the programme is effective and progressive. The introduction of Metabolic Fit means gyms can now prescribe an effective activity programme that fully supports medical assessments and treatment plans.

THE SCIENCE

Physical activity, performed regularly at optimal intensity, has been proven to help control blood glucose levels, and combat the effects of type 2 diabetes.

Scientific studies show the optimal training for people with type 2 diabetes

is a large number of repetitions over long periods, working all major muscle groups.

The eGym intelligent system increases insulin receptor sensitivity and reduces blood glucose levels in the long-term through building endurance, which, according to the German Diabetes Association, is the most effective type of training for those with diabetes.

eGym ensures the delivery of optimal efficiency and effectiveness. Once the member has attended an initial consultation with a trainer and the eGym strength test has been completed on each piece of equipment to determine their capabilities, the diabetes programme prescribes an automated four-phase programme with increasing intensity.

Following an initial four-week acclimatisation or 'Preparation' phase, based on two 30-minute workouts a week, individuals enter the 'Goal' phase, when training is designed with long exposure times

and high repetition rates, using eccentric loading to generate high intensities and working all large muscle groups. The focus is on increasing muscle stimulus without triggering a rise in blood pressure.

By applying training variables such as intensity, duration, number of reps and speed of movement – in measures found by scientific research to have the most positive impact on the reduction of blood glucose levels – and then applying periodisation, the eGym system has reverse the effects of type 2 diabetes in 39 per cent of cases. ●



EMAIL: sales@egym.co.uk

WEB: www.egym.co.uk/business

LINKEDIN: eGymuk

TWITTER: @eGymuk

FACEBOOK: eGymuk



ASIA PACIFIC



The Asia Pacific health club market is now worth US\$16.8 billion, according to an exceptional new report. IHRSA's Kristen Walsh shares some of the highlights

The second edition of the *IHRSA Asia-Pacific Health Club Report* was released recently in collaboration with Deloitte.

It demonstrates that the health and fitness industry in the Asia-Pacific region is in good shape – fueled by growing economies and with significant potential for continued growth.

Deloitte says only two markets in the region are considered mature, these being Australia and New Zealand, which have the highest penetration rates at 15.3 per cent and 13.6 per cent, respectively.

While the fitness market shows signs of rapid growth and professionalisation in terms of penetration rates in Hong Kong (5.85 per cent), Singapore (5.8 per cent), and Japan (3.3 per cent), significant opportunities for growth still remain in less developed markets, such as the Philippines (0.53 per cent), Thailand (0.5 per cent), Indonesia (0.18 per cent) and India (0.15 per cent).

Along with such growth opportunities come challenges. Real estate costs, limited rental availability, infrastructure underdevelopment, lack of professionalised services and increasing competition are just some of the realities club operators face when working in Asia-Pacific markets.

However, a favorable economic outlook, along with increasing health awareness and demand for group exercise and personalised training are expected to spur expansion.

"Driven by the momentum of economic prosperity, the fitness market in the Asia-Pacific region has shown steady growth, with a positive outlook going forward," says Alan MacCharles, partner at Deloitte China. "Overall market penetration is on an upward trajectory, reflecting an increasing awareness of the importance of good health and the role a club membership can play in this."

According to MacCharles, the region's fitness market remains stratified due to varying stages of development, which can be categorised into three tiers: ▶



China has the most members
in Asia at 4.52 million



**Driven by the
momentum of
economic growth,
the fitness market**

**in the Asia-Pacific region
has shown steady growth,
with a positive outlook
going forward**

Alan MacCharles, Deloitte China

NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN MILLIONS

China	4.52
Japan	4.24
South Korea	3.75
Australia	3.73
India	2.01
Taiwan	0.71
New Zealand	0.65
Philippines	0.53
Indonesia	0.47
Vietnam	0.44
Thailand	0.35
Malaysia	0.33
Singapore	0.32

NUMBER OF CLUBS

South Korea	6,950
Japan	4,950
India	3,813
Australia	3,715
China	1,767
Philippines	950
New Zealand	690
Vietnam	640
Thailand	600
Malaysia	375
Indonesia	370
Taiwan	300
Singapore	200
Hong Kong	180

AVERAGE COMMERCIAL CLUB MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP (GROSS) USD

Singapore	76
Hong Kong	68
Japan	57
Australia	57
South Korea	49
Thailand	49
Malaysia	42.5
China	41
Indonesia	40
Taiwan	37
New Zealand	37
Philippines	33
India	29
Vietnam	29

MARKET SIZE IN USD

China	3,944
Japan	3,943
Australia	2,831
South Korea	2,580
India	821
Taiwan	407
New Zealand	405
Hong Kong	396
Singapore	352
Indonesia	271
Philippines	256
Thailand	233
Malaysia	201
Vietnam	186

TIER 1: AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Market penetration rates

Australia 15.3 per cent

New Zealand 13.6 per cent

These are relatively established markets, with higher penetration rates than their neighbours. However, the mature and professionalised markets in these countries indicate limited growth potential; labor and real estate costs have also constrained growth here.

TIER 2: HONG KONG, SINGAPORE, JAPAN AND TAIWAN

Market penetration rates

Hong Kong 5.85 per cent

Singapore 5.8 per cent

Japan 3.3 per cent

Taiwan 3.0 per cent

These locations belong to the fast-expanding and maturing second-tier markets. This segment features gradually professionalised services, expanding consumer bases, and high concentration of leading players.

With room for growth, already fierce competition is expected to continue in the future.

TIER 3: REST OF ASIA PACIFIC

Market penetration rates

Malaysia 1.04 per cent

China's top 10 cities 0.97 per cent

Philippines 0.53 per cent

Thailand 0.5 per cent

Vietnam 0.5 per cent

Indonesia 0.18 per cent

India 0.15 per cent

The remaining seven Asia Pacific markets assessed by Deloitte are still in a comparatively early stage in their lifecycle, as a result of slower economic development and low awareness of personal health as a priority.

The fitness industry in these countries is typically concentrated in the capital city and also the first-tier cities, where markets are mainly led by the larger, commercial fitness club chains.

The markets in second-tier (and under) cities are dominated by standalone players that are mostly lower-end single site, independently owned operators, due to infrastructure underdevelopment, low purchasing power and low awareness of personalised training.

The underdeveloped regions in these countries demonstrate high growth potential – especially as rapid infrastructure development improves the accessibility and connectivity of these locations.

IMPACT OF GYM CONTRACTS

Laws relating to the way gym contracts are configured have an impact on the way markets develop. For example, in New Zealand, up-front payments for a long-term membership is forbidden by law, while in Singapore, some clubs collect one- and two-year contracts up-front. ●

Laws relating to gym contracts impact the way markets develop – up front payments are illegal in New Zealand, but not in Singapore, where one- and two-year up-front contracts are common

ACCESS THE REPORT

The full report is available at a price of US\$299 for IHRSA members and US\$599 for non-members from ihrsa.org/publications. Contact research@ihrsa.org with questions. Perfect Gym sponsored the report.



AUSTRALIA

"The Australian fitness market has experienced rapid expansion in the past three years, led primarily by the growth of fitness franchises. F45 has opened 200 new clubs; Anytime Fitness has added 70; Jetts Fitness has added 60; and Plus Fitness has increased by 45 clubs."



INDIA

"Retention rates are low in the Indian fitness club market. From a cultural standpoint, members treat fitness as a goal to be achieved and have yet to see it as a lifestyle to be maintained or to act on this as an aspiration."



INDONESIA

"Because the provision of sidewalks is limited in Jakarta, running outdoors is not a fitness option for people in the city, so fitness centres have become lifestyle destinations for people who want to exercise in safety."



CHINA

"Independent market research indicates that less than 20 per cent of all clubs in China are profitable, while at least 60 per cent are experiencing losses."



China has huge room for growth in both participation and profitability



JAPAN

"The ratio of public to commercial gyms is close to 50:50. In spite of this, public gyms are not seen as competitors to commercial gyms and the two co-exist."



MALAYSIA

"Fitness activities are typically male-focused in Malaysia, largely for cultural reasons. An estimated 60 per cent of fitness members are male in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, while the level is at least 70 per cent elsewhere."



NEW ZEALAND

"Growing awareness of the importance of healthy living has led to an increase in the penetration rate, up from 1.38 per cent in 2014 to 13.6 per cent in 2017. 24-hour gyms are the fastest-growing sector."



THE PHILIPPINES

"The Philippines has achieved one of the highest increases in fitness club penetration over the past three years, due primarily to the rise of affordable gyms which have opened up the market."



SINGAPORE

"Bulky equipment is being replaced by open space and group exercise is becoming popular. A medium to small gym size suits the cost-saving strategy for operators and also better fits customers' needs."



SOUTH KOREA

"Due to high rental costs, fitness clubs are generally smaller in size in South Korea compared to most of the counterparts in other Asia Pacific countries, excluding Hong Kong and Japan."



TAIWAN

"The top five players claim 77% of the overall market in terms of number of gyms."



THAILAND

"Most Thais still prefer to exercise in public parks, at home, or not at all."



Vietnam

"The fitness club market was worth US\$186 million in 2017, and is expected to expand rapidly in the next three years as Vietnamese investors start focusing on the industry."



*Legend has transformed the way we run our business
by continuing to deliver a high pace of change and
innovation which is tailored to our needs.*

Chris Rinder, sales director, Parkwood Leisure



A WINNING PARTNERSHIP

Parkwood Leisure and Legend Club Management Systems have collaborated to develop a new Customer Management Module, which combines enterprise-level reporting with membership sales and prospecting functionality to drive revenue

Parkwood Leisure – a Legend customer since 2008 – uses Legend's 'One System, One Solution' software across all 87 of its facilities. The system is powered by Legend's GDPR-ready, single, central database.

The system's new Customer Management Module has been designed to give Parkwood in-depth understanding of the prospecting and customer journey, providing a single, central database for all customers, including prospects, casual users and former members.

The new module has enabled Parkwood to automate elements of its sales process, improving task management and customer engagement, enabling the creation of bespoke customer journeys, the automation and control of personalised 'enquiry journeys' and ensuring optimal use of Parkwood's sales and marketing resources.

By leveraging high-level reporting, the system is also giving Parkwood a deep understanding of the customer journey, enabling better training and management of sales staff, resulting in growing membership numbers.

TESTING THE SYSTEM

Chris Rinder, sales director at Parkwood Leisure, explains: "When Legend approached us with the concept of the new Customer Management Module, we felt there was a real opportunity to augment our sales function.

"We've significantly improved our joining results and revenues by better understanding our customers' buying habits and then developing seamless journeys that maximise the opportunity for people to join. Also by quantifying the success of our marketing campaigns, and helping determine the best focus for our sales activities," he says.

Parkwood and Legend collaborated to carry out a three-month pilot of the module at North Solihull Leisure Centre and Tudor Grange Sports Centre.

The new functionality worked so well in the pilot, it was decided to further enhance the system by developing additional personalised journeys for casual and former members, who represent over half of Parkwood's membership joiners.

During the pilot, Legend and Parkwood also developed an innovative prospecting system that fully represented different customer enquiry journeys. They also mapped out the most effective customer engagement points within each journey and developed the range of outcomes and 'reasons for enquiring'.

LEVERAGING DATA

The Legend team also enhanced Parkwood's Business Intelligence and Reporting Modules to work hand in hand



Legend has worked with Parkwood Leisure to create powerful customer journey and marketing solutions



with the final version of the Customer Management Module.

Rinder says: "All membership sales and prospects now go through the Customer Management Module. We capture all contact information from prospects, as well as their goals and exercise history and then we log which communication or marketing method enticed them to enquire."

"We set tasks and reminders to ensure our sales teams follow prospects to the conclusion of their joining journey – either to sign up and seamless addition to the Legend membership management system, or removal if they decide not to join."

"We track the success of both individual and company sales and marketing activity against targets, ensuring the teams are maximising the opportunity for people to join the club."

"Legend's enhanced reporting shows the number of new enquiries, the appointments booked, the follow-up

calls made and the tours completed. A dashboard then shows us the number of joiners or non-joiners, which has enabled us to roll out a motivational commission scheme across our sales team."

As part of a three-year contract extension, Parkwood has announced it will be increasing its investment in the Legend solution, following the collaborative development of the Customer Management Module.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Rinder concludes: "Our relationship with Legend has transformed our operational efficiency and customer experience."

We now collect better quality contact information and have greater awareness of the sales journeys our members prefer. In addition we now understand the success rates of our marketing campaigns and are able to support and manage sales staff

performance, by motivating and training them to deliver optimal results."

"Our long term goal is to continue to roll out the use of Customer Management Tablets and to have a completely paperless membership sales process."

"None of this would be possible without the evolution of the Customer Management Module. Legend continues to offer us a winning partnership and deliver a high pace of change and innovation which is tailored to our needs. Legend has transformed the way we run our business."

TEL: +44 (0)1904 529575
EMAIL: info@legendware.co.uk
WEB: www.legendware.co.uk



LES MILLS

As the world's largest group fitness business turns 50, three generations

of the Mills family talk to HCM about striving for a fitter planet



Phillip, Jackie and Diana with Les. The family celebrates the 50th anniversary of its inception this year



Les Mills offers 21 workouts, including (clockwise from above), Bodyattack, RPM and Grit. All are updated every three or four months



B

ehind every successful business sits a defining belief that drives the company forward. For the Mills family, it's a passion for improving the health of others, teamed with an unyielding competitiveness that stems from their rich sporting heritage.

"When my dad, Les Mills, opened our first gym in New Zealand 50 years ago,"

says Phillip Mills, MD of Les Mills International, "he said the job of the fitness industry is to help people fall in love with fitness, and that's a mission we're still driven by today."

2018 marks the company's 50th anniversary – a rare feat in what's still a young industry. Les Mills started out with that one tiny gym in Auckland, New Zealand and has evolved into a global

fitness movement with a chain of gyms in New Zealand, a global licencing business for its fitness workouts and a research arm that validates and underpins the work of the business.

Today, the company's 21 different programmes – including high profile brands such as Bodypump, Bodycombat, Grit, RPM and Bodyattac k – are licensed in 20,000 clubs worldwide, with a team of 140,000 specially trained instructors delivering group fitness classes to over six million people a week.

But it could have been a very different story. Over the past half century, Les Mills has battled banks, con-artists, hostile rivals, natural disasters and personal demons – all of which have shaped the family-owned and -operated company that exists today.

At the centre of the Les Mills story are three men and three women – split across three generations – whose lives have all been ▶



When my dad, Les Mills, opened our first gym in New Zealand 50 years ago, he said the job of the fitness industry is to help people fall in love with fitness. That's a mission we're still driven by today

Phillip Mills

- influenced by their elite sporting backgrounds. These are company founder and four-time Olympian Les Mills Snr, his wife Colleen, who represented New Zealand at the Commonwealth Games and died in 2005, aged 71; their son Phillip and his wife Dr Jackie Mills MD; along with their two children Diana Archer Mills and Les Mills Jrn.

STARTING OUT

The origins of modern group fitness can be traced back to 23 Victoria Street West in Auckland. It was there that Les Snr and Colleen opened their first gym in 1968.

Overcoming a tough start in life – his father died when he was 11 – Les had become a celebrated New Zealand athlete and businessman who decided to branch out into fitness. He'd long had a passion for exercise and strength training, stemming back to his early teens.

"I was fascinated by strength particularly – always have been," says Les, who at 83 still regularly rides an indoor bike while watching TV and lifts weights in his garage gym.

"As a boy I sent away for the Charles Atlas course I'd read about in a magazine. I wanted to kick sand in the bullies' faces like Charles Atlas did and find a girl on the beach who would smoke cigarettes with me!" he reminisces.

"Then during the sixties, I was in the States on an athletics scholarship and there was a sunrise culture of gyms growing up, so I decided to take the concept back to New Zealand.

"We found a gym in Auckland which had just gone bankrupt – the American chap behind it was a fly-by-nighter who sold life memberships and ran off with the money – and we bought it from the liquidator for NZ\$3,500," Les recalls.

Opening on February 5th 1968, Les and Colleen were confronted with a queue of angry people wanting to work out and refusing to pay any more for the privilege.

He struck a deal to honour their memberships for a year if they'd commit to the gym beyond that and then set about adding new members to boost cashflow. The gym started out as a sport-based facility, mainly employing athletes the family knew through their sports training.

"We did a lot of circuit training," says Les Snr. "We didn't have aerobic classes in those days, but we ran circuits for the

A committed environmentalist, CEO Phillip Mills is passionate about the health of people and the planet

rugby trainers, the rowers and other athletes – they were time circuits, just like the circuits you see now.

"Colleen put a huge effort into getting the gym off the ground and everyone helped with everything. We had to work pretty hard at it and there was no goofing around – times were tough."

After a less than auspicious start, the gym gradually began to take off. Further sites were added across New Zealand and Australia, forming the basis of the 12-strong Les Mills New Zealand health club chain that still exists today.

Strength training was, and still remains, a big part of those gyms, but it was the high-octane group exercise classes that really put the fledgling business on the map.

EARLY CLASSES

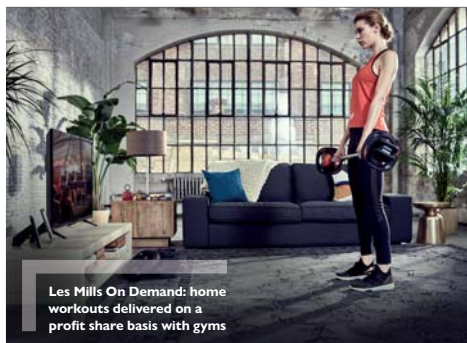
Having moved to larger premises up Victoria Street West (where the club remains today), the family converted the original Auckland site into a group exercise studio.

"It was very much in the mould of the boutique clubs you see today," says Phillip, who had just returned from an athletics scholarship at UCLA and was on the cusp of the company's eureka moment. "I saw the birth of aerobics in the US and brought a friend from the UCLA track team over to New Zealand to help us get the whole thing started. She'd been teaching aerobics classes in the US.

Les Mills Live events are held around the world, bringing fitness enthusiasts together for a day of fun and fitness instructors



Airport homecoming from the Rome Olympics: Phillip Mills and sister Donna with Les and Colleen



Les Mills On Demand: home workouts delivered on a profit share basis with gyms

"I'd just spent a year managing a rock band," he continues, "So we brought in dancers and actors who were incredible performers to teach classes, plus a lot of elite athletes. This was possibly the first time fitness and entertainment had been brought together in this way."

"We took the old aerobic dance-type classes and transformed them into sports classes with dumbbells and machines for circuits. Jackie and I spent hours trying out different moves in our living room, to the point where we wore out the carpet!"

"The classes were so popular we were bursting through the walls of our studio. We built another studio, then another and a fourth on the roof. That's when we thought, 'we're on to something.'"

FITNESS MEETS FEMINISM

What was notable about these classes right from the start of the 1980s was their appeal to women. Here was an offering that brought women into the gym, opening fitness to a whole new market.

For Jackie Mills, who as LMI chief creative officer oversees creation, production and training for all Les Mills workouts, it was the result of a wider societal movement.

"The 80s felt like a time of revolution for women," says Jackie, who for years combined her role at Les Mills with a career as a doctor. "Women could create their lives with greater freedom and employment opportunities – it was a time of empowerment."

LES MILLS VIRTUAL & ON DEMAND WORKOUTS

	Virtual	LMOD
BODYATTACK	YES	YES
BODYBALANCE	YES	YES
BODYCOMBAT	YES	YES
BODYJAM	YES	NO
BODYPUMP	YES	YES
BODYSTEP	YES	YES
SH'BAM	YES	YES
LES MILLS BARRE	YES	YES
LES MILLS TONE	YES	NO
CXWORX	YES	YES
RPM	YES	YES
THE TRIP*	YES	NO
LES MILLS SPRINT	YES	NO
LES MILLS GRIT PLYO	YES	YES
LES MILLS GRIT STRENGTH	YES	YES
LES MILLS GRIT CARDIO	YES	YES
BORN TO MOVE 2-3 YEARS	YES	YES
BORN TO MOVE 4-5 YEARS	YES	YES
BORN TO MOVE 6-7 YEARS	YES	YES
BORN TO MOVE 8-12 YEARS	YES	YES
BORN TO MOVE 13-16 YEARS	YES	YES

*THE TRIP is the main programme available on Les Mills Immersive

140,000 Les Mills-trained instructors deliver classes to six million people a week in 20,000 clubs worldwide

► "It was group fitness that brought women to the gym, because they really liked the social aspect of working out in groups."

As the classes took off, Les Mills began to license them to other clubs, first in New Zealand, then in 1981 in Australia.

Continued growth saw Les Mills go public in 1984, while a 1987 investment company buy-out enabled Les Snr and Colleen to divest and pursue new adventures. And then it all went badly wrong.

A month after the takeover, the 1987 crash wiped out the stock market and left the new owners in financial trouble. Having kept a small shareholding, Phillip was thrust into buy-back talks with liquidators in a bid to save the family firm from oblivion.

"I was in my early 30s with a young family, looking at needing to take out a loan of NZ\$10m to save the business – that was a hell of a lot of money back then," he recalls.

"It was a scary decision and a big gamble, but the family name was over the doors and I wasn't about to let it shut."

Through a loan from the liquidators and the sell-off of Les Mills clubs in Australia, Phillip took charge and the company was saved. But despite Phillip and Jackie's bold vision for a turnaround and their gift for group exercise programmes, the tough times continued and with the business heavily in debt and banks unwilling to back a niche fitness concept, Les Mills spent six years struggling to pay wages and keep the lights on.

Phillip says: "By '93 I was so burnt out I'd become pretty depressed. I'd put on weight, wasn't exercising and it took Jackie to grab hold of me and say 'Philly, you've got to get a grip.'"

"So I set myself goals – one was to make my way to A-Grade tennis. Of course, I never made it past the Whangarei Open, let alone Wimbledon, but within a year I lost 15 pounds, the depression lifted and the business started to turn a corner," he says.

Having spent decades honing its standardised exercise programming and teacher training system, the easing of the debt mountain meant Les Mills could once again dare to dream globally.

An Australian partnership with national swim coach and Canberra gym owner Bill Robertson led to the development of the model that took the licensing business worldwide.

In 1997 Phillip founded Les Mills International (LMI) as a separate company from the Les Mills NZ gyms, to focus on global licensing.

But once again, things were far from straightforward. Having

Les and Colleen Mills opened their first gym in 1968 in Auckland





The 1980s felt like a time of revolution for women. It was a time where they could create their lives with greater freedom and employment opportunities – a time of empowerment.

Group fitness brought women to the gym, because they really liked the social aspect of working out in groups

Dr Jackie Mills MD

underestimated the required levels of investment, LMI soon started to look like a bridge too far. “What we thought would cost NZ\$10m a year ended up costing NZ\$200m a year,” says Phillip. “We badly underestimated the scale of the challenge at the start and LMI lost money for its first eight years.

“Having to some extent nudged my dad out of the business, I then had to ask the old man to come back and help us steady the ship.”

Having recently concluded an eight-year term as Mayor of Auckland – one of many colourful career choices that have included coach, TV commentator and National Sports Director for Papua New Guinea – Les Snr returned to the business, bringing with him Jill Tattersall, who became CEO of LMI.

“I’d just lost re-election as Mayor and when Phillip called I thought ‘hang on fella, you don’t have to offer your dear old Dad a job just because he’s out of one,’” jokes Les Snr.

BACK TO WORK

“We needed to free up Phillip’s creative genius, so he could develop the products and the programmes and all the magic,” remembers Les, “So Jill took over the nuts and bolts of the management and I scooted around doing contracts and trying to sign up the Germans and the French.”

Inch by inch, the Mills family worked together to haul LMI back on track, and by this point it had become clear that there was an insatiable appetite among club members around the world for the fresh new workouts from New Zealand.

Appealing to both sexes was no doubt an important breakthrough, but that’s also been true of other workouts since, so what’s the secret behind the huge popularity and longevity of the Les Mills programmes?



Dr Jackie Mills
MD is chief
creative officer
of the Les Mills
business

THE SECRET SAUCE

Jackie Mills says: “I think for participants, the appeal is that the programmes deliver great results, create an incredible energy and they stay up to date with the latest moves and music.”

Staying ‘up-to-date’ requires each of the 21 Les Mills programmes to be updated every three or four months with new choreography, music and instructor training.

Programme directors scour the globe for trends and ideas to feed into this creative process. They also listen to hundreds of hours of music in search of the hottest tracks. Then it’s the job of the music licencing team to either gain permissions from record labels, or arrange for Les Mills Music (the biggest employer of New Zealand musicians) to create cover versions or original compositions.

“We’re very open about what it takes to put our programmes together, as it would be very tough to replicate,” says Jackie, adding that science is the real cornerstone of the results.

“Our head of research, Bryce Hastings (see *HCM May 2018*, page 16), works with academic institutions like Penn State University to ensure all classes are independently-tested. This data is used to produce peer-reviewed studies in academic journals,” she says.

“The research insights are harnessed by a team of experts to devise safe and effective choreography for Les Mills programmes, which are then screened through thousands of hours of in-club trials before being released to the wider market.” ▶

- One of the most important ingredients in the Les Mills formula is the people who deliver the classes. With an army of instructors worldwide, training and processes are pivotal to ensuring a smooth transition of programmes from Auckland to studios around the world.

According to Phillip, the instructor training side of Les Mills is actually loss-making. He says the commitment to maintaining high standards of instructor performance and providing them with affordable training options is what necessitates the license fee clubs pay.

As LMI creative director, programme director and presenter for some of the company's biggest workouts, such as Bodypump, Bodycombat, Barre and RPM – Diana believes it's vital the company is instructor-led in its approach.

"Instructors are the absolute heart and soul of Les Mills and our focus has to be their security and happiness," she says.

"It's really powerful to witness the passion and commitment they bring to their roles. These people are a true inspiration."

But the company hasn't always got it right with instructors. Diana admits lessons have been learned – from appearing too corporate and less of a people business – so the focus has shifted to really engaging and speaking to people on a human-to-human level.

"We're honest, open and direct with instructors," says Diana. "And we're really listening to what they want, to make sure they feel part of this enormous family."

"I think that's a challenge for everyone, as every business is going to become more digital and less human. It means we all need to focus on connecting back as people."

MILLENNIALS AND MORE

Aside from staying true to an army of thousands, staying ahead of the latest exercise trends has been another major challenge for the business.

Despite its reputation as a group fitness pioneer, the company was in need of a refresh by the end of the noughties and it took a few home-truths from Phillip and Jackie's children to realise it was time for a shake-up.

Phillip explains: "It was Les Jnr who came to us and said: 'Hey, some of your stuff is tired and doesn't work for our generation. We've got to change it up a level.'"

"It was a big wake-up call for us. Les Jnr and Diana play a huge role in the business and they've really led the charge in making sure we appeal to Millennials and Gen Z – something the fitness industry as a whole has struggled with to date."

Tasked with breathing new-life into the programme portfolio, Les Jnr – who is LMI creative director of Millennial programmes – set about what he calls 'inclusive evolution'. This meant refreshing the Les Mills brand to appeal to younger people, while forging stronger ties with those already connected to the brand.

Paying particular attention to music, style, intensity and the length of sessions, the resultant new programmes, Grit and The Trip, were unlike anything the company had produced before.

Les Mills started the company with his wife Colleen in 1968, inspired by the fledgling US gym market



“My wife Colleen put a huge effort into getting the first gym off the ground.

We had to work pretty hard and there was no goofing around – times were tough - Les Mills

Launched in 2012, Les Mills Grit ensured the company was well-placed for the fledgling HIIT boom, covering all bases with three distinct varieties: Grit Strength, Grit Cardio and Grit Plyo. But it was The Trip that really took the company into uncharted territory.

After teaming up with his friend Adam Lazarus, the pair created an entirely new category of workout, straight out of the digital entertainment world, dubbed 'Immersive Fitness'. As Les Jnr explains: "We loved the projection mapping and the light shows you see during live music events and wondered if we could bring these elements into group fitness."

"After several years of R&D, we landed on the idea for The Trip – a fully immersive indoor cycling experience where we project virtual worlds onto the walls of the studio."

"This combination makes for an incredible sensory experience led by music, beat-driven visuals, mind-bending landscapes and a highly effective workout," says Les Jnr.



Les Mills Jnr (below right), has developed Millennial programming such as GRIT (above) and THE TRIP (below left) – the immersive bike workout



TACTICAL ERROR

As anyone who has tried The Trip will attest, it's a powerful cinematic experience. However, some clubs were deterred from installing it by the high A/V set-up costs associated with the system, so has the programme lived up to expectations?

For Phillip, The Trip represents the future of fitness. But he says the company made tactical errors in bringing it to market which have since been rectified: "We let perfect get in the way of good by insisting clubs adopted expensive A/V set-ups with huge screens to ensure members benefitted from the full experience," he explains. "That meant US\$100,000 install costs which were out of reach for a great number of clubs."

"But we've listened and learned from that experience and the price of technology has also come down considerably, enabling us to create a range of more affordable options."

"Now The Trip is really starting to take off, because it's the most powerful fitness experience a club can offer."

A VIRTUAL REALITY

In Phillip's eyes, the industry's biggest battle is continuing to appeal to young people at a time when the average age of a traditional club owner can often be up to 60 to 70, or older.

Here he sees innovation, both in the content clubs provide and the way it's delivered, as being vital to bringing more

Millennials and Gen Zers into the club setting. "We see virtual workouts as a massive opportunity for clubs to make better use of their studios during off-peak times and introduce more members to group fitness," he explains. "As technology and members' expectations evolve, clubs offering members exciting workouts, when and where they want, will stand out."

As well as ramping up its studio offering with new Les Mills Virtual programmes, the company is also taking this content into the cardio area with indoor bikes – developed with Matrix Fitness and Stages Cycling – which were unveiled at IHRSA and FIBO. They feature on-bike screens, enabling users to join virtual classes.

But it's Les Mills On Demand (LMOD), the at-home workout solution, which has raised eyebrows the most. The 'Netflix-for-Fitness' platform has been positioned as a means for clubs to reach beyond the four walls and engage members, even when they can't make it to the gym. Profits from LMOD subscriptions, paid by members (US\$12.99/month), are shared with the club.

Will this mean members no longer need to visit their club, and does it signal a shift away from the live classes that have made Les Mills famous? "Absolutely not," says Phillip. "Live workouts will always be the pinnacle and nothing can replace that, but whether it's a Body Coach video on Youtube or the old Jane Fonda tapes, people have always worked out at home as well as at their club. LMOD means clubs can support members in maintaining the



We believe every individual who becomes healthier can create a ripple effect in their community and our industry has such an important role to play in driving this

Dr Jackie Mills MD

- exercise habit, so they're less likely to quit and it means they can benefit financially as well.

"And it works both ways – this is all about using technology to grow the market, reach new audiences who consume content in different ways, and ultimately drive people towards the unbeatable thrill of a live class in their local club. Already, we're seeing a third of LMOD users migrating to their local clubs."

2020 VISION

Growing the entire fitness category will be key to Les Mills making good its bold goals. Putting numbers to the vision, Phillip says by 2020 the company aims to be providing 20 million live workouts a week and to have reached a valuation of NZ\$1bn.

"The money's not important to us, but it gives us the means to develop the organisation to do the things we want it to," says Phillip, acknowledging the many struggles, challenges and mishaps that have accompanied the family's significant successes.

Citing a 'catalogue of Les Mills failures' – a global PT licensing business, several clothing firms and three separate nutrition companies have gone by the wayside during the family's 50 years' in business – Phillip says it's vital to have that level of cashflow available if the company is to continue to push the boundaries.

"We've made more mistakes than I care to count over the years, but you take your chances, you learn from them and you go again," he says. "Ultimately, a rising tide lifts all boats and we're focused on working closely with our club partners, harnessing technology to grow the market and ensure everyone benefits from a fitter planet."

A SOCIAL MISSION

Corporate social responsibility and activism have always been a strong part of the Les Mills identity. The company has donated millions to green charities and environmental and political causes, while last year it partnered with Unicef to raise over a US\$1m to improve water, sanitation and basic hygiene in East Africa through the 'Workout For Water' campaign.

The company sees a strong link between the physical and environmental health of the planet, and this formed the basis for the 2006 book *Fighting Globesity*, which was co-authored by Phillip and Jackie. The book highlights the complex links between

Diana Archer Mills is from the third generation to be involved with the business



exercise, diet and the environment, making a cogent argument for policy and social initiatives that could hugely reduce the preventable health conditions blighting global health systems.

"A fitter planet means not only the fitness and health of its citizens, but also the planet itself," Jackie explains.

"As a company we're true greenies and believe every individual who becomes healthier can create a ripple effect in their community. Our industry has such an important role to play in driving this."

BRAND LEGACY

As for who'll drive the company forward over the next 50 years, it seems certain the Mills family will remain at its core. Phillip and Jackie have no plans to retire any time soon, while Diana and Les Jnr are thriving in their senior roles. But there's also a bigger picture, says Phillip. "Les Mills is more than just a company that is managed by a few individuals," he adds. "There's a global management team of 2,000 people in place, which contains many talented successors."

"Beyond that, there's a collective energy that is dispersed among the clubs, the instructors and the participants.

"It's become a movement that is bigger than all of us," he concludes. "We're proud to have supported millions of healthy lives through our fitness industry journey." ●



The latest workout, Les Mills Barre was developed by Diana Archer Mills

■ CLUB OWNERS TALK ABOUT LES MILLS INTERNATIONAL AT 50



"We now have almost 400 clubs and Les Mills classes have been a key part of our growth. They brought people to us, made them trust us and gave them enjoyment. We have seven different Les Mills classes in an average club. People really like the variety, the quality, the music and the instruction. As for my instructors, you know they've got Les Mills tattooed on their derrières, right? They really love the system!"

David Patchell-Evans, founder & CEO,
GoodLife Fitness Clubs



"People who teach Les Mills are passionate about the brand and what it stands for – there's such a high level of expectation. That's where the value is – the integrity of the brand. Once members or staff have a chance to get involved, they'll never leave it. There isn't another brand that comes close."

Geoff Dyer, president Crunch Fitness
West Florida/Orlando/Atlanta



"I've always been so impressed with what they do and by how much thought and attention goes into delivering really good programming – we club owners are totally appreciative of that. Les Mills is also really driving the acceptance of virtual around the world."

Steve Schwartz, president & CEO, Midtown Athletics



"Their passion for doing programmes brilliantly every time and for spending what it takes to do it right, has allowed a smallish company from a smallish island nation to own the programmed group exercise market around the world."

Frank Napolitano, president, 24-hour Fitness



"What's so incredible is they're constantly reinventing themselves, and that's the key to success to any great company – staying true to the core business while being committed to change."

Lynne Brick, president and founder, Brick Bodies



“

The workout has to be engaging, and that's what the Lagree Fitness Method is designed to be. If you go to the gym and watch TV on the treadmill for an hour, I don't think that's fitness

SEBASTIEN LAGREE

It's the workout Meghan Markle quoted as one of her favourites when she lived in LA and it's arrived in the UK. Kate Cracknell speaks to the man behind the Lagree Fitness Method

How did you get into the industry?

My background is bodybuilding. I started to lift weights when I was 13, living in France, and I became passionate about it.

When I moved to the United States I started to do more, and then when I moved to LA I became a personal trainer.

It was through personal training that I heard about pilates – I became an instructor because it was such a buzzword at the time. This was back in 1998 and everyone wanted to do it.

However, I found that many of my clients wanted results that pilates couldn't give them, so in reality I never really taught it. I taught my bodybuilding regimen on the reformer, which I realised I could use to do core work, squats, lunges and so on – even though it wasn't really designed for that.

My workout was a kind of cardio-bootcamp-pilates fusion and people loved it. They'd never seen that kind of fitness before – never seen pilates equipment being used that way – and I was booked full time.

How did things progress?

I opened my first studio in September 2001 and it went really well. Then, in 2003, I made my own machine – the Proformer – which was a huge reformer with platforms and cables.

My one mistake was this: I should have said at the time 'hey, this isn't pilates', it's something different – but I didn't. I went along with what people wanted and delivered my workout under the label of pilates. I was a new PT, and as long as people came to me and paid me, that was good enough.

Twenty years later, I realise the damage and confusion this has caused. We've had to put a lot of energy into restoring the idea of what Lagree Fitness actually is. I've really been pushing the brand – Lagree Fitness – since 2011.



Lagree believes workouts must be multi-faceted

What exactly is the Lagree Fitness Method?

The Lagree Fitness Method is essentially the workout I always delivered, which addresses every element of fitness with a workout using my specially designed machines.

When we exercise, many of us will pick one or two elements. We might run and think that's fitness, or lift weights, or do yoga and we think it's the cure for everything. But each of these disciplines is just one part of fitness.

Fitness for me is far more multi-faceted. As a society, we're more mobile than ever before, but we don't physically move. ▶



“ Six out of seven people in the US don't exercise. In the meantime, gyms are fighting over the one in seven, trying to convince them their fitness method is better. Me? I want to focus on the six out of seven and try to understand why they don't work out. People say the LA fitness market is saturated. It isn't. It's just everyone's going after the same people

► This is a problem, because the body needs to move to be well and healthy – and to get that happening, you don't need to just do one thing. You need to do everything.

So what I do at Lagree Fitness – and through the evolution of my machines – is create a workout regimen that targets all facets of fitness: cardio, core, balance, flexibility, endurance and the development of large and small muscles.

It increasingly ticks the boxes for both men and women, because women are getting into strength, understanding that having muscle definition is sexy, and men are moving more towards flexibility, balance and core.

What other needs does it address?

There's the whole mental aspect. A workout has to be engaging, and that's what the Lagree Fitness Method is designed to be. If you go to the gym and watch TV on the treadmill for an hour, I don't think that's fitness. You're not engaging anything.

Perhaps the most important aspect, though, is that while the workout is high intensity, it's low impact. I look at Lagree Fitness as a healthy alternative to HIIT or CrossFit. I believe a lot of older people don't work out because the workouts they're aware of are too harsh on the body. Lagree Fitness is something you should be able to do for the rest of your life.

How has your business developed and grown?

My first studio went well, and by 2006 I was getting offers to expand. I decided to go down the licensing route.

We opened the first licensed studio that year and it took off from there. We now have 300 licensees worldwide – some have over 20 locations – and I've never had to market or promote. All the growth has been by word of mouth.

But what I'm most proud of is what I'm able to do off the back of that income stream: the fact I can evolve the method and the equipment and keep offering a unique style of fitness.

What's different about your equipment?

I was the first person to put a platform on the reformer – firstly as the Proformer, and more recently as the Megaformer. I also got rid of the shoulder rests, I added handles and worked out a way to get different tension on the springs just by moving my hands and feet around.

As a result, when you work out on one of my machines you can have so much more variation within the exercises.



The Lagree Megaformer is based on a pilates reformer, with additional features to minimise transition time between exercises

The moves we do would be dangerous on a normal reformer, but on the Megaformer there are all these places to put your hands and feet, so you can do the exercises safely and get the maximum benefit from each movement.

I also design my machines to minimise the transition time between exercises. To my mind, if I do a few repetitions and then do nothing for five minutes while I set up for the next exercise, there's nothing: no raised heart rate, no cardiovascular workout, no muscular intensity, no endurance.

Finally, we have a ramp that allows you to raise one end of the Megaformer to create an incline. That not only gives more intensity, but now each incline level will target the



muscle differently; you can change the effect of each exercise simply by raising or lowering the Megaformer.

So, while I loved the original reformer's springs and the carriage that rolled back and forth, everything else in my machines was an evolution from the original.

You've created a new Supraformer – why?

In the 20 years I've been teaching professionally, the number one excuse I get – it doesn't matter which continent I'm in – is time. 'I know I should be working out, but I don't have time.'

People have this idea that you need to work out for an hour to get any benefit. In fact, you can get real physiological

benefit from just one minute of moving correctly. So I'm on a quest to make workouts more accessible and manageable.

The Supraformer has been designed with this in mind. It not only inclines, but you can also tilt the machine from side to side. This allows you to work all three body planes without having to bend or twist. You get a really high intensity workout that's very low impact on the spine, joints and connective tissue. All this means you can do a workout in 25 minutes, as opposed to 40 minutes for a Megaformer class.

I have two studios in LA where we test out new concepts, and the 25-minute classes are proving so successful I'm now working on a 15-minute workout. My idea is not to get



“ There are thousands of workouts out there that burn 1,000 calories an hour. Who cares? What can your workout give me at an emotional level? That's what I'm interested in

- ▶ people moving less – it's to motivate more people to move. Because 15 minutes or 25 minutes is better than nothing.

What's the next big trend in fitness?

Since we launched our 25-minute workout, I've seen lots of other studios launch shorter workouts. This is a real opportunity: instead of competing, studios will be complementing each other. No longer will people have to choose between a membership at SoulCycle or Barry's Bootcamp or whatever. Shorter workouts will be cheaper, so they'll be able to afford more memberships. There'll be more mixing and matching of different workouts.

My goal is to get the price of a Lagree workout down to US\$9, which I think we'll be able to do when we launch the 15-minute workout. That's the price of a coffee in LA. Lagree Licensees don't have to follow this pricing model, but in my own studios, I want to address all the barriers that are preventing people from working out.

I've been working on a TV documentary called *The Future of Fitness* and we found that six out of seven people in the US don't exercise. In the meantime, all these fitness businesses are fighting over the one in seven who do, trying to convince them that their fitness method or offering is better.

Me? I want to focus on the six out of seven, try to understand why they don't work out and do something about it.

People say the LA fitness market is saturated. It isn't. It's just that everyone's going after the same people.

When we opened our Supra studio in 2016, over 13,000 people joined – and that's in spite of there being 40 Lagree Fitness studios across LA. Around 80 per cent of people who joined had never heard of us before. Exercise just hadn't been on their radar until a 25-minute workout came along.

But it isn't just time and cost that are the barriers. I think another reason these people don't work out is that they just don't have any kind of emotional, psychological, intellectual or spiritual connection to physical activity or exercise.

If you only focus on the physical aspect of fitness, you're missing the big picture. Fitness changed me at an emotional and a spiritual level. It increased my concentration and my self-confidence. It taught me discipline. It taught me to believe in myself. These are the qualities that have changed my life – not the fact that I was able to bench press X amount of weight or do 10 repetitions of an exercise.

Once people realise fitness isn't just about losing weight or having tight abs, but that its effects go way deeper than that – I think they will really want to engage with it.

Mark my words, 20 years from now, gym adverts will be saying: 'If you do this workout, it's going to increase your emotional intelligence by two points' or 'If you do this workout, it will help you cope with the stresses of life better.' Because let's face it, there are thousands of workouts out there that claim to burn 1,000 calories an hour. Who cares? What can your workout give me at an emotional level? That's what I'm really interested in.

Tell us about your licensing model

I want studio owners to have the flexibility to express their own vision of fitness. People pay a licensing fee and can then use the Lagree Fitness name and method – but if they don't want to, they don't have to. They can just use the licence to buy the Megaformers, although we do provide clear guidance and training to ensure these are then used properly.

But for example, some studio owners have Megaformers alongside a barre studio, TRX, boxing, Woodway treadmills, Versaclimbers and so on. Probably half of our licensees have Megaformers mixed with something else.

I'm fine with that – in fact, I learn from them and have many licensees who are growing creatively in their own way.

I couldn't tell you if one is doing it better than another. As long as people love the workout – as long as they keep coming and see the results they want, that's my goal achieved. Because if you change a body, you change a life.



Studio Lagree has opened at the new Nobu hotel in London's Shoreditch – part-owned by Robert De Niro. The hotel launched last month



■ DUCHESS OF SUSSEX, MEGHAN MARKLE, IS A FAN

Meghan Markle has been quoted as saying Megaformer workouts are "hands down the best thing you could do for your body."

When she lived in Los Angeles, Markle worked out on the Megaformer at Platinum Pilates, the studio chain founded by her friend Heather Dorak.

Where will the business be in five years?

I imagine we'll have twice as many studios as we have now, but I don't mind if we don't. It's just a means to an end for me, allowing me to continue to refine my machines and my method.

The next thing I'm going to be working on is the way we create resistance. A spring has its advantages, but it's still not the optimum source for tension. I'm creating my own type of electronic resistance that's designed to keep your muscle at optimum stimulation, but at the same time reduce the impact. Because yes, your body needs intensity, but not to the detriment of your joints, spine, ligaments and connective tissues.

This tension will also mean the machine will react to users; no need to adjust the spring, as the machine will do it automatically. It will also tell you what to do and when to do it, so the role of teachers will become more about motivation and inspiration.

I plan to open another studio in LA, perhaps more, where we can continue to test our prototypes and new ideas before we pass the technology on to licensees. And I'm working on new solutions to make the studio environment more special.

To compete with at-home fitness, you have to create an experience at the studio, so for example I'm working on lighting, including integrating lighting into the machines.

I'll probably launch some supplements too, but I don't want to put my name on anything without doing the research.

And I want to branch out and create the first Lagree Centre. This would be a holistic facility where – alongside the workouts – we'd have recovery facilities: cryotherapy, infrared saunas, hypobaric chambers and acupuncture.

The focus would be on restoring your health – not just physical but emotional, helping people reach a point where they sit back and realise they're happy to be alive.

One day I might even create a retreat where you detox, turn off your phone and focus on you. I'd like to help people understand what it feels like to be truly in balance: mind, body, spirit. I think if people were genuinely comfortable in their own skin, everything would change – not just in themselves, but in the world. ●



MORE THAN QUALIFICATIONS

Now in its 15th year of operation, awarding organisation Active IQ continues to go from strength to strength, supporting the industry with new initiatives and resources

Fifteen years ago on June 27, 2003, Norman Basson started a business called Premier IQ (PIQ). He opened his doors with one qualification and two members of staff.

Fast forward to 2018 and that business is now known as Active IQ and today the organisation has grown to offer 103 qualifications and employ 54 staff.

"The physical activity sector has changed dramatically in the last 15 years," says Jenny Patrickson, Active IQ managing director. "The diversity of services has never been better, the demands on

training providers have never been so great and the scrutiny of graduates has never been more intense.

"Active IQ is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the industry and our 360-degree vision takes in everyone from learners, trainers and training providers to employers," she says. "We're also fully committed to educating and supporting the physical activity industry, by offering far more than just qualifications.

"We're assessing and examining learners and training providers and

driving forward initiatives such as the Skills Hub, End-point Assessment (EPA), Professional Recognition Service and our Professional Career Development Service," she explains.

SKILLS HUB

The Active IQ Skills Hub (activeiq.co.uk/skills-hub) offers a wealth of resources and comprehensive support to employers, approved centres and learners, allowing them to enhance their skills.

The Hub is divided into seven key areas for ease of navigation: qualification launch pad; continuing professional development; graduate tool kit; funding and policy; chief medical advisor; business and marketing tool kit and marketing tool kit. Each is a rich source of knowledge in the form of tip sheets, downloadable resources and links to webinars, videos, vlogs and blogs.

"The aim of our Skills Hub is to impart expert knowledge to support organisations and learners, and upskill around teaching, learning, funding, apprenticeships and traineeships," says Patrickson. "Our senior management team shares its expertise alongside independent experts to create a wealth of knowledge that covers training, education, medical matters and marketing."

END-POINT ASSESSMENT

Active IQ is one of the first EPA organisations to be approved by the Register of End-point Assessment Organisations for the physical activity sector. Its team of EPA experts ensures focused support is given to employers, apprentices and training providers, while its unique apprentices' toolkit and employers' toolkit helps apprentices and employers navigate the changing landscape of apprenticeship delivery and assessment.



(Left to right) Managing director Jenny Patrickson with Laura Sheasby, James Clack and Sarah Edmonds from the Active IQ team



Active IQ has grown to be a major force in training for the activity sector



The physical activity sector has changed dramatically in the last 15 years and the diversity of services, demands on training providers and scrutiny on graduates have never been higher

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

The Active IQ Professional Recognition service enables organisations to display a professional kitemark for their own non-regulated training programmes.

It covers a wide range of training programmes of varying length with different content and delivery methods. Training providers and employers meeting the dual-kitemark standard are also recognised as CIMSPA skills development partners.

"New training concepts keep our industry fresh and challenging, but it's essential that new programmes are scrutinised with care and supported where necessary to fine-tune their delivery," says Patrickson. "Our Professional Recognition Service ensures all new products and programmes can be brought to market with complete confidence." ●

Active IQ

TEL: 01480 467950

WEB: www.activeiq.co.uk

EMAIL: businessdevelopment@activeiq.co.uk

PROFESSIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Active IQ Professional Career Development service enables individuals to progress to the next stage of their career by developing their knowledge and understanding of teaching, assessing and internal and/or external quality assurance.

With many more learners seeking to gain Level 4 qualifications, Active IQ has now added additional Level 4 technical qualifications to its offer, helping trainers and assessors stay at the forefront of the industry.

The Professional Career Development service trains trainers in these areas:

- Active IQ Level 3 Award in Education and Training
- Active IQ Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and Practices of Assessment
- Active IQ Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement
- Active IQ Level 4 Award in Understanding the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- Active IQ Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- Active IQ Level 4 Award in Understanding the External Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training
- Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Advanced Personal Training
- Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Strength & Conditioning

Pia Fontes and Ben Wintour are fighting knife crime with their charity Steel Warriors


“

I read a shocking insight that a ton of knives are being confiscated every month in London alone and I wanted to do something about it



Steel Warriors in Tower Hamlets is already attracting local people, PTs and 'gym tourists'





Confiscated knives
are melted down and
reforged to make
outdoor, urban gym
equipment



STEEL WARRIORS

With knife crime growing in the UK, two entrepreneurs decided a new approach was needed. Ben Wintour, co-founder of Steel Warriors, speaks to Kath Hudson about turning confiscated knives into street gyms for callisthenics



Our sign says 'This gym has been built using knives taken off the street, to show that life should be built on steel, not destroyed by it,' says Ben Wintour, co-founder of Steel Warriors, a new charity taking a fresh approach to fighting knife crime.

Situated in Langdon Park, in the London borough of Tower Hamlets, Steel Warriors is a callisthenics gym constructed from two tonnes of recycled knives taken off the streets. Wintour aims for this to be the first of many sites around the UK and doesn't plan to stop until there are no knives left to recycle. "When there's no more steel to build with we'll have done our work," he says.

This seems an unlikely career deviation for the co-founders, Ben Wintour and Pia Fontes, who previously worked together in PR, but Wintour says the inspiration came from constantly reading about crime figures in the newspapers and realising that a fresh approach was needed.

"Working in PR, I had to read the newspapers every day and became concerned about the issue of knife crime. I read a shocking insight that a ton of knives are being confiscated every month in London alone and I wanted to do something about it," he says. "Looking at previous campaigns, we saw they were well meaning, but not that effective. The two central messages were that if you carried a knife you were likely to either get locked up, or else hurt or killed. Neither of these messages resonated with the audience, or were acting as a deterrent."

Wintour and Fontes decided that a whole new approach was needed, where teenagers could be empowered, so that they no longer felt they had to have a knife for protection. "We looked at the reasons why teenagers were carrying knives and ▶



We want the space to feel
unthreatening and unintimidating,
so lots of people will come

► found that one was for protection, and the other was to flex their muscle," he says. "So we looked at finding alternative ways to meet these needs. Callisthenics is becoming quite a thing in prisons and seemed a good place to start."

The duo had a number of boxes they wanted to tick. Firstly, they wanted to provide a place where teenagers could build both their bodies and confidence. Since many of those who carry knives can't afford gym membership, they wanted it to be free. They also wanted it to be a place where a community could be built, the topic of knife crime could be discussed and steps taken towards prevention for all involved.

FACING THE CHALLENGES

Having come up with a great idea, there were then a number of logistical challenges to overcome: getting buy-in from the police, finding a site, finding people who could turn knives into a gym, designing the gym and paying for it all.

"It wasn't an area I was familiar with, so I had to make lots of calls to steel fabricators, gym builders and engineers," says Wintour. "The idea started to take off when Heyne Tillett Steel came on board – they had worked on projects at The Science Museum, liked the sound of what we were doing, and were prepared to do it on a pro bono basis."

It took a little more persuasion to get the police involved, as they wanted a strong case that the project would work. However, once they came on board they were a supportive partner. Many of the companies involved did so on a pro bono basis. "We made it clear from the start that we didn't have the means to pay, as there was no funding in place, but with the support of our partners we managed to get the first gym



A range of metalworking companies worked pro bono to make the first gym, in Tower Hamlets, a reality

up and running virtually for free," says Wintour. "There were a few items we couldn't source free, including the rubber matting. These costs were underwritten by a benefactor."

A location was found next to a youth centre called Spotlight in Tower Hamlets. The borough has seen an 8 per cent rise in knife crime in the last year and is one of London's most deprived areas. The site has a high footfall, but isn't part of gang territory, making it a more neutral location.

In terms of programming, the equipment features a snapcode that people can scan to take them to a YouTube channel featuring online training which explains how to use it.

■ CALLISTHENICS

Callisthenics means beautiful strength, originating from the Greek words kallos (beauty) and thenos (strength). It's a discipline that uses body weight training to build up core strength.

The aim of callisthenics is to increase strength and flexibility through pushing, pulling and lifting your own body weight. According to statista.com, from 2006 to 2016 the number of people participating in callisthenics in the US rose from 7.12m to 25.11m.

DETERRING LOITERING

After a discussion, the team decided against having benches around, as they don't want people to loiter. "We had a conversation about offering free wifi, but concerns were raised that this might make it a place to deal drugs," says Wintour.

"One of our ambassadors is a former drug dealer who has turned his life around," she explains. "Drug dealers are likely to carry knives and might benefit from being in a place that is about transforming attitudes, but although this is something we want to encourage, we also want the space to feel unthreatening and unintimidating, so lots of people will come. Hence the decision to keep it wifi free."

Wintour says it's encouraging to see the local school making use of it, as well as women from the local Bengali community. A few PTs have also got on board and it's attracted the attention of gym tourists from further afield.



The tough discipline of callisthenics is growing in popularity, especially among the target groups



The success of this site will be key to taking plans forward to develop more around the country. Wintour and Fontes are now working with the police to look at crime figures and Snapchat to see how many visitors come to the location.

Steel Warriors is now a registered charity and the team is looking at ways to raise funds for a roll-out. "Our partners have been very generous, but we can't expect them to continue to make a loss, so we're about to start a fundraising push," says Wintour. "We're hoping to get as many gyms off the ground as possible. At the moment the first one is making an impact on a local level, but we want to make a real change."

As well as more sites in London, the cities of Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester are on the list and Wintour is appealing to the health and fitness sector for help. "Lots of young people can't afford gym membership, but it would be fantastic if gyms could give back to their communities by sponsoring gyms that serve the dual purpose of mobilising hard to reach groups and taking a stand against knife crime." ●

Those without whom...

Heine Tillett Steel
<http://heynetillettsteel.com>

Inciner8
<https://www.inciner8.com>

Newby Foundries
<http://newbyfoundries.co.uk>

Alloy Fabweld
www.alloyfabweld.com

Rebel Strength
<https://rebelstrength.co.uk>

Barsparta
<http://barsparta.co.uk>

Corbyn Groundworks
www.corbynld.com

Freuds
www.freuds.com

Proud Robinson & Partners
www.proud-robinson.com

Clearcut Sound
www.clearcutsound.com

Cutlaser cut
www.Cutlaser cut.com

727 Tool Hire
www.727toolhire.com

Anthony Ward Thomas
<https://ward-thomas.co.uk/>



Engage. Inspire. Educate.

FitQuest brings full bio-mechanical lab technology to your facility with a combination of easy to use, sophisticated measurement and easy to understand output to provide the first self-administered, scientifically robust fitness measurement in the industry.

Use data driven analytics to bring new insights to your members, to support goal attainment and improved engagement opportunities. Our research programmes and product development continue to drive measurement solutions forward for the fitness sector.

Contact our team at
infohc@mieffitquest.com or call
020 7518 7323 to be part of the
fitness measurement revolution.



FitQuest

www.mieffitquest.com



"Adding FitQuest to our estate is a part of our business plan. It has given us another edge over the competition and complements our dedication to innovative technology"

Richard Keen, CEO, CityFit



Fast-growing Polish operator CityFit is using FitQuest to raise the level of service for members

Teaming up

CityFit members are taking their fitness to the next level with the help of FitQuest, which is now installed in nine clubs within the CityFit estate across Poland

In a competitive fitness market, FitQuest is helping CityFit stand out, offering something different to members and so far the feedback has been exceptional.

From helping people fast-track their weight loss goals to being able to identify small muscle imbalances, FitQuest is providing CityFit members with a new level of insight into their training which was previously only available to elite athletes or premium gym members.

FitQuest, which is powered by MIE medical, measures a person's physical capacity over eight parameters in just four minutes, offering a wider range of data and feedback to users than other devices on the market, as well as a much more accurate and useful levels of analysis.

This unique testing supports operators'

goals by offering tailored exercise programming for gym-goers, based on a breadth of data on their physical fitness.

COMPETITIVE EDGE

CityFit is a modern, innovative brand of low cost gyms in Poland. "We offer competitive prices, flexible membership options, 24/7 opening hours and high-end equipment," says CEO Richard Keen. "Adding FitQuest to our estate is a part of our business plan and has given us another edge over the competition. It complements our dedication to innovative technology."

CityFit has always focused on leveraging technology that can support and manage the member experience. "That's why FitQuest was a perfect addition to the CityFit offering," says Brian Firth, FitQuest

CEO. "CityFit members can use the FitQuest machines both independently or with a trainer to help them achieve their goals and track their progress. It's the first time members have been able to access quantitative data related to their fitness."

CityFit opened its first club in 2014 in Rzeszow. This was followed by clubs in Warsaw, Gdansk, Krakow, Wroclaw, Katowice, Chorzow, Bydgoszcz, Lublin, Bielsko-Biala and Walbrzych. The chain now consists of 15 clubs in 12 cities.

The team is planning to expand to 50 locations across Poland in the coming years, with FitQuest playing an important role in the offering.

To find out more, contact:
info@miefitquest.com
www.miefitquest.com



- **LOCKERS**
- **BENCHES**
- **PADLOCKS**
- **CUBICLES**
- **VANITIES**
- **SERVICING**



Contact us today for further information

T: 0203 651 1500

E: info@safespacelockers.co.uk

www.safespacelockers.co.uk



SAFE SPACE

THE CHANGING ROOM EXPERTS



Safe Space delivered a stunning quality changing room, with the final installation exceeding our expectations

Lee Clary, Impulse Leisure

Impulse Leisure chose Safe Space for its Belhus Park renovation



Luxury upgrade

The south-east's latest go-to golf destination, the luxurious Belhus Park Golf and Country Club, has added the final touch of class to its renovations with luxury lockers from Safe Space

The club, which is undergoing a huge upgrade to add to its already impressive facilities, is located in an enviable position in the grounds of the former Belhus Mansion.

For this high-end, high-spec renovation, only the best would do and Lee Clary from Impulse Leisure – the trust supporting the renovation – wanted to ensure the upgrade of the luxury changing rooms at Belhus Park was in safe, reliable hands, so contacted Safe Space Lockers.

The club required a quality changing room, in a style sympathetic to the rest of Belhus Park and using products that would stand the test of time.

Clary says: "The team at Safe Space were an absolute pleasure to work with, from the initial contact through to the site visits and subsequent quote."

"The company also offered an attractive proposal, with reasonable costs

and a choice of solutions to ensure the most appropriate product was selected for the installation."

"We had very tight deadlines," he says, "but Safe Space committed to them and delivered a stunning quality changing room, as promised, with the final installation exceeding our expectations."

SECURITY A PRIORITY

The matter of security is taken very seriously at Belhus Park Golf and Country Club, so it was also important to deliver lockers that were both stylish and secure.

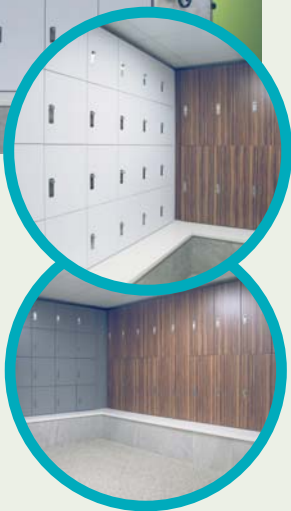
Two types of locker configurations were chosen to supply the correct number of locker compartments, while fresh new colours complement the floor and walls in the stately location.

Director of Safe Space, Dominic Hyett, said: "There's no greater accolade than a happy customer. We've built an

excellent reputation for delivering and accepting nothing but the best.

"Our secret is listening to our customers, delivering expert advice and producing results we and they can be proud of. It's a simple process, but one we live by and that delivers results."

Safe Space serves numerous high-end and luxury clients but also provides changing rooms to suit a variety of budgets and tastes. To find out more, contact: dominic@safespacelockers.co.uk



JUNE

20-23 | Active Uprising
 Greater Manchester, UK

ukactive has launched a brand new multi-day celebration of physical activity, Active Uprising, to replace the Flame Conference and Awards. Bringing together over 1,000 leading decisionmakers for a festival of insight, debate and action to tackle inactivity and celebrate the fun of fitness.

www.activeuprising.com

20-23 | SPATEC Europe
 Movenpick Hotel Mansour Eddahbi, Marrakech, Morocco

SPATEC EUROPE 2018 will bring together Europe's most important spa operators of leading medium-to-large hotel resort, destination, athletic, medical and day spas to meet with key leading domestic and international suppliers to participate in a series of one-on-one meetings over two dedicated business days.

www.spateceu.com

27 June - 1 July | IDEA World Convention
 Hyatt Grand Manchester & San Diego Convention Center,
 San Diego, CA, USA

Claimed to be the world's longest-running international fitness convention and featuring a programme of educational sessions from industry-leading presenters.

www.ideafit.com

AUGUST

16-18 | FIBO China
 National Exhibition & Convention Centre, Shanghai, China

About 20,600 trade and private visitors from 47 countries and regions attended FIBO China 2017 in Shanghai. The exhibitor side also grew compared with the previous year, with more than 300 brands from 25 countries and regions; 63 per cent comprised international brands.

www.fibo-china.cn

Raise money to fight male cancers



Climb Ben Nevis for MS research

CHARITY CHALLENGE

24 August 2018 | Ben Nevis Night Hike
 Ben Nevis, Scotland - Highland, UK

Climb Ben Nevis overnight - guided by moonlight and your headtorch! Upon reaching the highest point in the UK, you'll experience a beautiful sunrise over the Scottish Highlands.

This epic challenge is in aid of the MS Society, the leading UK charity striving to beat multiple sclerosis by investing in world-class research and offering information and vital support to those affected by the illness, for which there is currently no cure.

The trek is led by expert mountain leaders and can be done at any pace to accommodate mixed groups. You'll finish with a well-earned celebratory breakfast. Registration is £30.

www.mssociety.org.uk

30 August - 1 September | IHRSA Fitness Brasil Latin
 American Conference & Trade Show
 Transamerica Expo Center, São Paulo, Brazil

The 19th IHRSA/Fitness Brasil programme is designed for all types and sizes of clubs - from established clubs to those that are just starting out in the industry. The programme provides educational opportunities in a variety of interactive formats: traditional seminars, how-to sessions and best practice.

www.fitnessbrasil.com.br

CHARITY CHALLENGE

19 - 24 September 2018 |
Cycle Zürich to Oktoberfest
 Zurich, Switzerland to Munich, Germany

Cycle from Zürich to Munich, conquering 410 km over four days. You'll ride through an Alpine fairytale of forests, mountains and lakes, all in aid of Orchid, the charity supporting men with prostate, testicular and penile cancer. You'll reach your finish line in Munich, Germany, just in time for the famous Oktoberfest, when you'll swap your bikes for beer and celebrate your achievement at the largest festival in the world.

Registration is £149 with a sponsorship target of £2,400.

www.dream-challenges.com



June 2018

pulsebeat

All the latest news and headline-grabbing stories from The Pulse Group



Paralympian Ian Marsden unveiled as ambassador for Pulse Fitness.

We are delighted to announce Paralympic medal-winning canoeist Ian Marsden as our newest ambassador.

"Having been involved in sport and physical activity from a young age, both as an able-bodied person and someone with a disability, I know how difficult it can be for someone with a disability to step into a gym environment," says Ian. "I am delighted to become Pulse's newest ambassador as they are truly paving

the way when it comes to creating fitness equipment for those with a disability. I'm looking forward to supporting them and working together to create more opportunities for those with disabilities."

Ian will be supporting Pulse nationwide, inspiring those with disabilities and driving awareness through various events and appearances of our award-winning range of inclusive fitness equipment.

"I am delighted to become Pulse's newest ambassador as they are truly paving the way when it comes to creating fitness equipment for those with a disability."

Ian Marsden,
Paralympian.



From the left:

Dave Johnson, Production Director at Pulse Fitness,
Ian Marsden, Paralympian,
Mo Chaudry, Chairman at Pulse Group.



Inclusive fitness
at the heart of the
Pulse Group



Eddie 'The Beast' Hall
'competition winners
revealed



Pulse Design & Build
on schedule at
Deben Pool



All the news on the
latest Pulse Fitness
installs



What could we do for you? Let's start the conversation today. Call us on (+44) 1260 294610.

Inclusivity at the heart of Pulse Group

Designed to perform

"Inclusivity has been at the heart of the Pulse Fitness design process for more than 15 years, that is why we have more IFI accredited commercial fitness products than any other UK fitness supplier.

We firmly believe that everyone, regardless of disability, should have access to high tech fitness equipment. To date, we have 38 Pulse machines (including cardiovascular and strength) that are accredited by the Inclusive Fitness Initiative and encompass inclusive features such as swing-away seats and multi-position handgrips for wheelchair users and large raised iconography on weight stacks for visually impaired users.

Our intuitive biomechanical design approach means our inclusive fitness accredited strength machines fully accommodate able-bodied users as well, thus keeping costs minimal to the operator as one machine is truly inclusive.

From the initial sketch through to prototype and product testing, my British in-house product design team work in partnership with the IFI and disability user groups at every stage of the product design process to deliver a peak performing, safe and reliable suite of machines for all."



Comments: Dave Johnson,
Production Director at Pulse Fitness



Design, innovation and development



Pulse has a range of inclusive cardio products



Pulse has a range of inclusive strength products

St. George's Park Westfield brings health & fitness to all

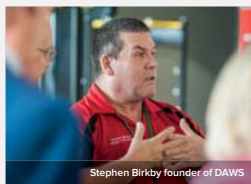
Supporting inclusivity initiatives can also be seen in the clubs The Pulse Group operate too. St. George's Park Westfield has a partnership with the charity Disability Awareness in Sport (DAWS) to offer specialised fitness programmes for those living with a disability.

St. George's Park Westfield is operated by Leisure United in partnership with the FA, The Pulse Group and Sheffield City Council. The

facility is one of three soccer hubs part the Park Life project, a grassroots initiative to get more people playing football.

DAWS, was set up by Stephen Birkby, after he suffered an accident at work which fractured his spine and left him paralysed. The group was set up to tackle the lack of exercise provisions for those with a disability in the city of Sheffield and to help those with a disability get into fitness.

The 150-station gym is equipped with a wide range of kit from Pulse Fitness' award winning IFI accredited equipment. It is now the permanent home for the charity and they run eight hourly sessions per week to assist those living with a disability get into fitness, with over 30 members travelling across the county.



Stephen Birkby founder of DAWS



DAWS joined SGP Westfield at the official opening



Over 30 members join the weekly sessions

Construction at Deben Pool nearing completion

The £3M construction project at Deben Pool is 90% complete. Pulse Design & Build, the dedicated construction arm of the Pulse group, has been working in partnership with the Suffolk Coastal District Council for the last 8 months to transform the dated facility into a state-of-the-art leisure centre. The pool, originally built in 1973 as an outdoor lido, has

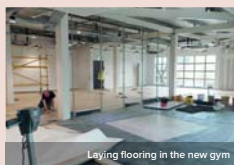
been completely refurbished and now includes a viewing gallery, alongside a new thermal suite, complete with steam, sauna, ice rooms and lounge area. It also features a 50-station gym on the first floor, with all gym equipment supplied by Pulse Fitness, a fitness studio, group cycling area and new reception area.



Installing high level fascias



Tiling the refurbished pool hall



Laying flooring in the new gym



Tiling complete in the new thermal suite

"The redevelopment of Deben Leisure Centre over the past eight months really showcases what can be achieved within the parameters of an existing facility, all whilst on time and to budget. We are excited for the final fit out and ultimately the grand unveil which will show the local community what an impressive, modern and sustainable leisure facility we have created."

Matt Johnson, Executive Director at Pulse Design & Build

Pulse Fitness creates state of the art gym for Eastbourne College

Pulse Fitness were awarded the contract due to their extensive expertise and knowledge of the strength and conditioning market. The facility forms part of the college's new build Sports Centre, which will be used by students and staff alike as well the college's specialist sports teams.

Team Pulse carefully selected and installed a wide range of equipment from their strength and conditioning range including dumbbells, Olympic benches, a plate loaded leg press machine and alpha plates.



Strength & conditioning focus to the new gym

Thornton Recreation Centre receives full equipment upgrade to attract a younger market

The gym at Thornton Recreation Centre, operated by Bradford Council, has recently undergone a complete transformation in an effort to attract a younger demographic to the facility.

Pulse Fitness has supplied and installed a wide range of its state-of-art equipment including our top of the range Series 3 cardiovascular equipment complete with E-scape Virtual technology and PulseMove. The Series 3 range also allows members to connect to the internet,

watch TV and access social media all whilst working out.

The gym has benefited from a complete upgrade of its strength equipment and now includes 12 stations from Pulse's latest H-Strength line as well as equipment from its plate-loaded range. Pulse Fitness has also supplied a wide range of equipment from its free-weights and functional training range including dumbbells, barbells, half racks and Olympic discs.



Top of the range cardio equipment

Pulse Global Dealer of the Year awards

We are incredibly proud of our global business. With a growing number of dealers right across the globe we are now represented in 31 countries across six continents and have enjoyed a 40% increase in global sales year on year. Every year we celebrate with our Dealer of the Year awards which recognise the best dealers and thank them for their contribution to our business. This year's award winners were:



Global Dealer of the Year

1st

SCOTFIT
GERMANY

2nd

H2 SPORTS
SWEDEN

3rd

PULSE FITNESS
GHANA

BEST NEWCOMERS

FITNESS SOLUTIONS
CHINA

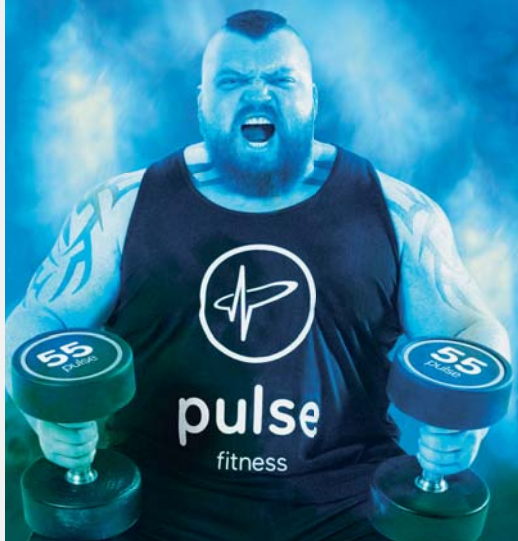
BEST LOOKING CLUBS

UPDATE FITNESS
SWITZERLAND

Eddie competition winners revealed

We received an overwhelming response – more than 2,500 entries – to our train with Eddie Hall competition we launched in January.

A diverse mix of gyms including chains, boutiques and private operators all entered for a chance to train alongside The Beast.



We are delighted to announce the three winners are:

**JD
GYMS**
of
Birmingham

**RHINOS
GYMNASIUM**
of
Stamford

**SOUTHGATE
LEISURE CENTRE**
of
London

Be sure to follow us on facebook [@thepulsegroup](https://www.facebook.com/thepulsegroup) to see videos and updates of Eddie's training sessions at each of the winning gyms.

STYLE & SUBSTANCE

Flooring is the foundation of a club's look and feel, combining functionality with aesthetics.

Tom Walker takes a look at several recent flooring projects that are making an impact with members

FUNCTIONAL FIT OUT

Supplier: ORIGIN FITNESS

Client: Club Soulgenic, Jersey

Club Soulgenic is an independently-owned health club in Jersey and considered among the island's premium fitness facilities. Owned by CEO and founder, Glenda Rivoallan, the club opened in the island's capital St Helier in January 2018 and has four studio spaces.

Rivoallan worked with Origin Fitness on the fit out of the club, with Origin supplying everything from the fitness flooring to the yoga studio mats and the 15m sprint track.



DURABLE STYLE

Supplier: REPHOUSE

Client: Seara, Hua Hin, Thailand

Sports Engineering and Recreation Asia (Seara) recently opened a three-storey showroom and HQ in Hua Hin, Thailand.

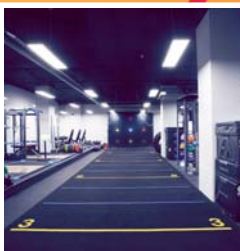
The 100sq m (1,070sq ft) ground floor showcases Neoflex REPTiles – dual-durometer, digitally cut rubber tiles that serve as a resilient surface for a range of activities. The top surface is finished with synthetic EPDM rubber for good grip and durability. The brush stroke motif and inlaid track were designed in house.

"Seara's latest showroom is a leading example of what is possible when the largest surface in the club, the gym floor, is used to create a remarkable aesthetic," said Michael Brinkers, managing director of Rephouse.



SURFACING SOLUTIONS

for Sport & Leisure Facilities



SPORT | FITNESS | PLAY | ACOUSTICS

- POLYURETHANE, TIMBER & EPDM SURFACES FOR SPORTS HALLS
 - INTERLOCKING RUBBER TILES FOR FREE WEIGHT AREAS
- SHOCK ABSORBENT SAFETY SURFACING FOR PLAYGROUNDS
- ACOUSTIC FLOORS FOR CINEMAS, BOWLING ALLEYS & GYMS
- SHOCK PADS & INFILL MATERIALS FOR OUTDOOR PITCHES

Contact us now:

Office: +44 (0) 1706 260 220

Email: Sales@TVS-Group.co.uk

Web: www.TVS-Group.co.uk



TVS GROUP

SPORT | FITNESS | PLAY | ACOUSTICS

www.TVS-Group.co.uk



► NOISE REDUCTION

Supplier: EXF

Client: GymBox Victoria London, UK

GymBox has a long-standing relationship with EXF, so when it came to the launch of its new Victoria site, it turned to the flooring company for help. The focus of the club is on class-based exercise and it houses a professional-standard boxing ring and combat area, a Wattbike studio, a large free-weights area and functional training space.

"We've been working with GymBox for over a decade," says Ben Steadman,

business development director for EXF. "We're used to dealing with complex briefs and this project certainly came with a few challenges due to its underground location and offices above.

"We needed to ensure we could provide a solution that would minimise noise, so we spent a lot of time carrying out acoustics tests before work began.

"We came up with a bespoke solution to supply 290sq m (3,100sq ft) of 15mm

rollout flooring from our Freedom range. The range has been designed for areas of heavy footfall, where noise reduction and anti-slip properties are important.

"We also installed our strength tile range. Able to withstand the toughest environments, it's designed for areas that require exceptional flooring protection.

Finally, we created an electric blue 52sq m (560sq ft) turf sledge track and a dedicated stretching area."

A SOLID FOOTING

Supplier: BERLEBURGER
SCHAUMSTOFFWERK (BSW)

Client: AXT CrossFit, Berlin, Germany

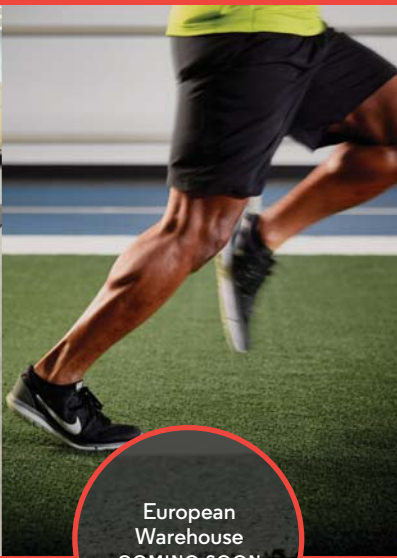
The independently-owned AXT CrossFit club in Berlin, Germany – which focuses on individual, functional fitness programmes – recently underwent a gym-wide redevelopment. For the revamp, AXT appointed BSW to create a 1,200sq m (12,900sq ft) area dedicated to CrossFit, weight-lifting and yoga, as well as a separate 150sq m (1,600sq ft) training area exclusively for martial arts.

Both new areas were fitted with an everroll impact+ sports flooring, installed by BSW. This two-layer flooring system absorbs impact forces and protects screed floors, ideal for those areas of the studio that have to cope with heavy loads.

"I couldn't be more satisfied with the floor, it's perfect," says AXT CrossFit manager Fabian Mahler. "Its elasticity in particular is the best guarantee for effective training, as you can actually feel it taking the strain off your body." ►



Can a floor do more?



European
Warehouse
COMING SOON

Yes.

Coming to Europe in 2018, Ecore Athletic offers high-quality rubber surfaces available in beautiful colors, patterns, and dimensions at a great price. Ecore Athletic products deliver safety, ergonomic, and acoustic benefits to solve your performance needs.

ecoreathletic.com
Made in the USA

ecore | Built by Yes.



SHOCK ABSORPTION

Supplier: PHYSICAL COMPANY

Client: Kobox City, London, UK

Boutique boxing and fitness studio Kobox currently operates two sites – one that is located below shops in the City of London. The owners wanted to minimise any disturbance from the workouts, which involve weights and wall balls hitting the walls and floor.

Physical Company's solution was a 20mm shockpad, topped with an 8mm Everlast rubber flooring. Together, the flooring provided great cushioning on the concrete floor and excellent sound reduction.

"We tested a variety of products and did drop tests with weight plates," says Paul Farrell, account manager for Physical Company.



ATHLETIC SURFACES

Supplier: ECORE

Client: Matrix Fitness & Health, Lahore, Pakistan

Ecore has expanded its global reach with its first installation in Pakistan. The US-based company, which specialises in transforming reclaimed materials into performance surfaces, provided flooring for the Matrix Fitness & Health club, founded by entrepreneur Murad Ansari.

Ecore installed three different athletic surfaces for the men's weight room, the women's weight room and cardio area and the group fitness studio.

All three products are made out of performance rubber, providing safety, ergonomic and acoustic benefits.

"The customers really appreciate the extra cushioning," says Ansari.



A FLEXIBLE SPACE

Supplier: JORDAN FITNESS

Client: FTC Gym, Ipswich, UK

Jordan Fitness was tasked with transforming the FTC Gym in Ipswich – an independent studio that focuses on providing members of all abilities with affordable, functional fitness.

Following consultations with FTC, Jordan decided to utilise its highly durable and versatile Activ Rubber Flooring, pairing it with a custom coloured turf.

"We've created an amazing functional area that can adapt for both group exercise and one-to-one use," says FTC director Jamie Bell.

Zak Pitt, Jordan Fitness managing director, added: "Our install team worked day and night to deliver the project in just 72 hours."



VISUAL ZONES

Supplier: PAVIGYM

Client: North Lakes Hotel & Spa

A Pavigym flooring system formed part of a complete overhaul of the health club at North Lakes Hotel & Spa earlier this year.

The brief for the flooring project was to create an environment in keeping with the surrounding Lake District area.

Fresh Green Pavigym Turf was selected in the strength areas, Pavigym Endurance in the free weights and Pavigym Traffic for the circulation and cardiovascular areas.

The investment has been credited with an increase in member numbers and improved retention.

"Pavigym did an outstanding job," said Stuart Angus, commercial director for the club operator, Thwaites Hotels.

MEMBERS FIRST



Maintaining a successful membership strategy can be challenging, but DFC's revenue management system can save time and money – and help keep members engaged. Ivan Stevenson explains how it works

DFC has a fully managed revenue management system – what does that mean for gyms?

The system incorporates all the key processes required for the management of members, including, billing and customer service, credit control, and CRM integration. The system also takes care of security and compliance.

By partnering with DFC, our clients not only decrease their administration costs, but also free up time for key stakeholders within the business to focus on customer interaction and engagement relating to the sales and retention processes. This has a direct impact on their bottom line through increased sales – and decreased attrition.

Tell me about DFC's Online Joining Portal – how does it work, and how does it make the customer journey easier?

Called FastDD, our Online Joining Portal is a slick, user-friendly 24-hour sales tool. With it, members can join not only from within the club environment, but also, if they'd prefer, from outside the club at their own convenience – at home, work, or on the go – from a variety of devices.

Promotional-code technology means that our clients can plan their marketing throughout the year; these codes can even be linked into social media platforms to further drive sales.

FastDD also automates bank verification, which reduces delays that often rear their heads at first payment.

Can this drive revenues?

By utilising bolt-on technology, our clients have seen an increase in membership yield by asking at point-of-sale if there are other services the member may be interested in, such as personal training or junior memberships or activities bookings.



With DFC, members can join in the club or at home, work or on the go

"Our approach to re-engaging with members is proactive, through the deployment of our professional call centre team or the power and ease of use of our MyPayments portal"

Throughout this process, the customer journey is of the utmost importance, and we've worked in partnership with our clients to ensure maximum conversion rates are achieved. This is also integrated into our clients' CRM solution.

All this translates into increases in both membership numbers and revenue; in the first 12 months of working with DFC, one of our newest clients has seen an increase in memberships of 13 per cent and an increase in membership revenues of 22 per cent.

How do you decrease attrition?

Decrease in attrition is delivered as a result of our true business partnerships with our clients. By handling all the key aspects of member revenue management, our clients are able to concentrate on their members and ensure they're looked after.

Our approach to re-engaging with members is proactive, through the deployment of our professional call centre team or the power and ease of use of our 'MyPayments' portal.



DFC saves clients and their employees valuable time, so they can look after members

As an example, a recent client with approximately 50 sites has seen a decrease in attrition of 2 per cent within six-months of signing up with our services.

How can you help gyms re-engage with customers?

DFC's values replicate those of our clients and we work together to ensure

we're re-engaging with members quickly, efficiently and effectively.

Our 'MyPayments' portal makes it easier for members to bring their membership account up to date and get back into the club and all this functionality is integrated into the CRM, to ensure a smooth automated process for members at all times.

This portal can exist as an integrated feature on our clients' app or website – again making it very easy for members.

What level of management reporting is available?

Accurate and swift reporting to key stakeholders within our clients' businesses also allows them to re-engage with customers who have suggested they wish to leave the facility or have cancelled their payment to the club.

On average, we increase the length of stay of members by three months.

This means DFC saves clients – and their employees – valuable time. We handle all the key aspects of the process so they can get on with running and growing their business and more importantly, looking after members. ●



DFC clients have seen an increase in membership yield by asking at point-of-sale if guests are interested in things like personal training

DFC

Revenue Management
Solutions

TEL: +44 (0) 1908 422000

EMAIL: sales@debitfinance.co.uk

WEB: www.debitfinance.co.uk

TWITTER: @debitfinance

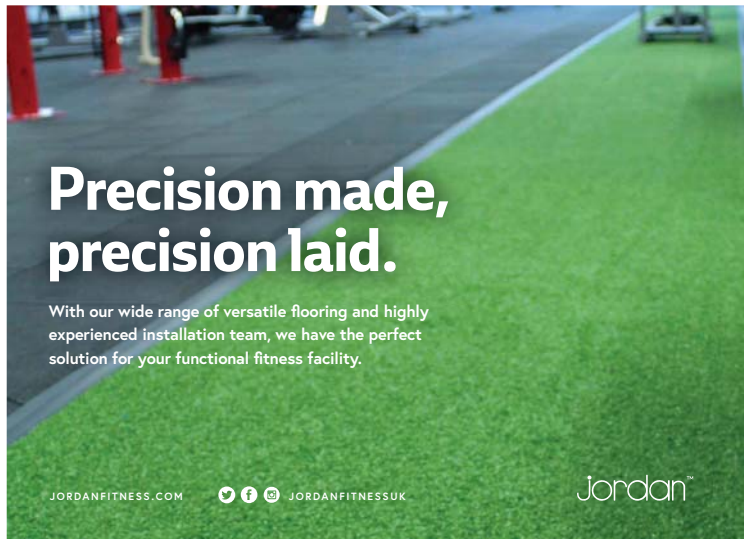


ServiceSport

THE UK's LEADING INDEPENDENT SERVICE PROVIDER

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

www.servicesport.co.uk ● 0845 402 2456



Precision made, precision laid.

With our wide range of versatile flooring and highly experienced installation team, we have the perfect solution for your functional fitness facility.

JORDANFITNESS.COM ● JORDANFITNESSUK

Jordan™

FIBO
SPECIAL

PRODUCT INNOVATION

Lauren Heath-Jones rounds up the products and services launched at FIBO 2018

Diana Archer Mills on the new Les Mills Barre launch

Les Mills exhibited its full range of training programmes at this year's FIBO, including the new Les Mills Barre programme.

Billed as the modern interpretation of classical ballet, Barre capitalises on the current trend for ballet-inspired training. The class offers a 30-minute session that uses traditional ballet techniques to tone and shape muscles, without the use of a physical barre.

"Without the barre for support, the body's strength

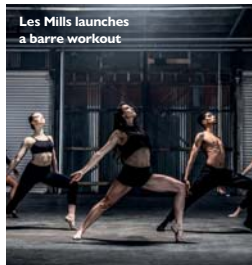


The authentic balletic purpose and movements target the glutes, thighs, cores and postural muscles, and participants see results very quickly
Diane Archer Mills

and stability become the focus. It may look beautiful, but don't underestimate the burn," says Diana Archer Mills, who is creative director and programme creator at Les Mills.

"The authentic balletic purpose and movements target the glutes, thighs, cores and postural muscles, and participants see results very quickly," she adds.

The programme has recently launched in the UK and will also be made available on the Les Mills Virtual platform from this month.



Les Mills launches a barre workout

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
LES MILLS

New mobility range 'bridges the gap' between fitness and wellness, says Jeff Davis

German boutique fitness company Five Concept debuted its brand new range of Mobility flexibility and stretching equipment at this year's FIBO.

An extension of the brand's Basic line, Mobility consists of five pieces: Chest, Stand, Ischio, Glute and Lateral.

Each station is designed to allow users to gain a feel

for their range of motion, enabling them to also perform the movements without instruction where needed.

Manufactured in Germany and distributed in the UK by Reach Wellness, the equipment provides users with a comfortable position which enables them to improve both their posture and movement, while performing the exercises.

"Five Concept uniquely bridges the gap between fitness, wellness and therapy on the gym floor," says Jeff Davis, MD of Reach Wellness.

"Five Concept provides the opportunity for mobilisation, movement preparation, rehabilitation and recovery.

"Given the phenomenal popularity of Five Concept in mainland Europe, there is excellent potential for rapid growth in the UK and



Given the phenomenal popularity of Five Concept in mainland Europe, there is excellent potential for rapid growth in the UK and Ireland

Jeff Davis

Ireland. Third Space Clubs and Nuffield Health Clubs are already early adopters of Five Concept in the UK. We're excited at the potential demand," Davis adds.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
FIVE CONCEPT



Five Concept launched its new Mobility range at FIBO

► Precor offers member-focused digital experiences with new eGym partnership, says **Steve Carter**

Precor has announced a partnership with fitness software developer eGym, which will see eGym's SmartStart technology integrated into the Precor Experience Series P82 and P62 consoles.

The partnership – currently in its pilot stage – is designed



We believe technology is an enabler and should be used to solve issues. By linking with leading fitness technology providers such as eGym, we provide operators with the best tools to deliver a great digital experience for exercisers

Steve Carter

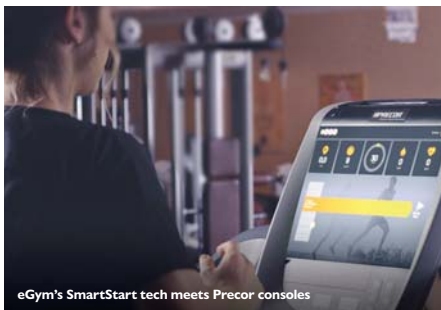
to focus on the member experience and offers a number of easy-to-access workout options.

Members log on using an RFID chip, and can choose from three options: Quickstart, eGym's SmartStart and Precor's Workout of the Day, which offers motivational and individualised workout plans.

SmartStart offers members a range of personalised training programmes, as well as giving them the opportunity to set goals, monitor their training sessions and track results.

It also has a step-by-step performance test, which users can take every three weeks to calculate their 'Cardio Age' and assess physical performance. Results are then used to automatically update training objectives and set new targets once a goal has been met.

Kerstin Obenauer, country director at eGym UK, says: "This is an example of how successful supplier collaboration can have a hugely positive impact on the



eGym's SmartStart tech meets Precor consoles

user experience, increasing motivation and driving performance improvements."

"SmartStart makes the classic 'Quickstart' option intelligent by creating bespoke, automated and effective cardio-programmes that constantly propel users towards their goals," she adds.

Steve Carter, MD of Precor UK says: "We believe

technology is an enabler and should be used to solve issues.

By linking with leading fitness technology providers such as eGym, we provide operators with the best tools to deliver a great digital experience for their members and staff."

**fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
PRECOR**

Richard Sheen urges clubs to make full use of space with new Pulse range at FIBO

Pulse Fitness debuted a space efficient collection of strength training equipment and showcased its recently launched functional training equipment at FIBO.



The dual strength line is a 10-piece collection consisting of a chest and shoulder press; deltoid and pec fly; assisted chin and dip; lat pulldown and seated row; leg extension and seated leg curl; and recumbent leg press and seated calf.

The pieces are made from steel and have stitched black upholstery, an enclosed weight stack, carbon covers and smooth feel handgrips, as well as clear user instructions.

"The new dual strength range is ideal



The new dual strength range is ideal for gyms with limited space or facilities who want to make the most of the space they have available, whilst still being designed and built to the highest standard

Richard Sheen

for gyms with limited space or facilities who want to make the most of the space they have available, whilst still being designed and built to the highest standard," says Pulse national sales manager Richard Sheen.

Including full and half racks, medicine balls, kettlebells and battle ropes the range is designed as a space-saving functional training solution.

"We saw and acted upon the need for our own free weight accessories range. We are so proud to have the Pulse brand on our outstanding new range," says Pulse national account manager Jake Saunders.

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

Concept2 expands range at FIBO with new BikeErg, explains **Alex Dunne**

Concept2 has expanded its line of ergometers with the launch of its latest innovation, the BikeErg. Designed to offer a real-feel indoor cycling experience, the BikeErg features flywheel and dampner technology that creates a smooth and responsive ride, at the same time giving the user complete

control of their resistance throughout the workout.

The bike is fitted with the self-powered PM5 performance monitor, which offers instant feedback and features Bluetooth and ANT+ connectivity, as well as a number of display and workout options that give users access to their performance data including pace, watts, RPM and calories burned.

"For years customers have been asking us to make a bike like our rowers, and we're delighted that we're now able to do so," says Concept2 managing director Alex Dunne.

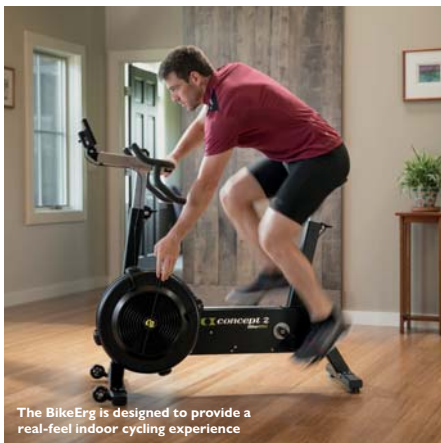
"The reaction from the market has been great, and we're already seeing it show up in a wide range of programming," Dunne adds.



For years customers have been asking us to make a bike like our rowers, and we're delighted that we're now able to do so

Alex Dunne

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
CONCEPT2



The BikeErg is designed to provide a real-feel indoor cycling experience

Clubs become go-to fitness providers with Wexer Broadcast, says CEO **Paul Bowman**

Virtual fitness provider Wexer has launched a live streaming solution that promises to deliver high levels of member satisfaction, engagement and retention.

Wexer Broadcast is designed to optimise a facilities' staff and space by allowing clubs to broadcast and stream live classes from one studio to another, as well as direct



Every club has its 'superstar' instructors: those for whom demand is far greater than the number of members you can squeeze into their classes. What Wexer Broadcast does is take this talent – the best-of-the-best content – and get it out there to a huge audience

Paul Bowman

to their members' mobile devices, giving them an in-club experience wherever they are.

"Every club has its 'superstar' instructors: those for whom demand is far greater than the number of members you can squeeze into their classes. What Wexer Broadcast does is take this talent – the best-of-the-best content – and get it out there to reach a huge audience," explains Wexer CEO Paul Bowman.

"It allows clubs to grow their market simply by using the talent they already have; by extending the influence of their instructors beyond their four walls, clubs can become the go-to provider of fitness for even more people. Ultimately, it makes great fitness easier to consume – wherever the consumer may be."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
WEXER



Clubs stream live classes from one studio to another

► Pavigym's family programme makes fitness fun, says **Daniel Gonzalez**

Pavigym revealed a new programming concept for families, incorporating its innovative Prama solution at FIBO.

Slated as an industry first, and billed as 'fitness disguised as fun' the Pavigym's Kids &

Families programme offers mixed sessions for kids and parents, as well as kid-only sessions. The classes combine circuit training and gamification with Prama, a multi-sensory flooring solution featuring lights and music, and are designed to get more children active by creating a fun and competitive environment,

"Incorporating functional movements that are natural for both adults and children encourages the family to be active and healthy, as well as teaching children that exercise can be fitness disguised as fun," says Pavigym master trainer and programme creator Daniel Gonzalez.

"Our programme focuses on games and interactive exercises, with a bit of a twist with some friendly competition," he says.



Incorporating functional movements that are natural for both adults and children encourages the family to be active and healthy, as well as teaching children that exercise can be fitness disguised as fun

Daniel Gonzalez



Prama features a multi-sensory flooring solution

"With the belief that active, healthy kids turn into active, healthy adults, Prama provides an appealing environment for both kids

and parents to enjoy 45 minutes of fun and fitness."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
PAVIGYM

Becky Jalbert on Matrix training cycle trio, which launched at FIBO

Matrix introduced a host of new products to the European market, including the CXP Target, CXC and CXM training cycles.

The CSP Target training cycle has original

programming and a new Target Training display, which puts users completely in control of their experience. The CXC and CXM training cycles are group training solutions, designed for cycling



manager, personal and group training for Matrix.

"They can select the CXC for the feel of a real outdoor ride, step up to the CXM for enhanced metric tracking or choose the CXP for a colourful Target Training Display that injects camaraderie and competition into every cycling session," Jalbert adds.

Additionally, the company launched Matrix Connected Solutions, a new technology solution offering a complete digital ecosystem that operators can tailor to their specific needs. It enables operators to increase retention, build engagement, enhance differentiation, maximise ROI and boost revenue, and is designed to enhance the exercise experience for both the member and the operators.

They can select the CXC for the feel of a real outdoor ride, step up to the CXM for enhanced metric tracking or choose the CXP for a colourful Target Training Display that injects camaraderie and competition into every cycling session

Becky Jalbert

enthusiasts, and enable operators to offer a unique group exercise experience to their members.

"It's important that our customers have options that suit their needs," says Becky Jalbert, global product

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
MATRIX

The CXP Target training cycle launched at FIBO





"We see digital facility management as the future, and we're unleashing the ability for clubs to get data from their members to help them on their journey"

Jason Worthy, head of Digital Ventures Group, Life Fitness

Life Fitness has launched its first ever club management system, the Halo Fitness Cloud

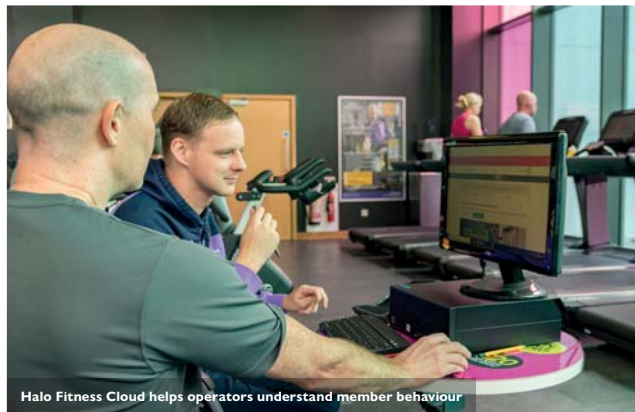
What is Halo?

Halo Fitness Cloud is software for fitness facilities that helps operators manage the facility and enhances the experience for an exerciser. Halo lets operators do things like track equipment usage, customise product settings, add member profiles, create a connection between trainers and exercisers, track facility maintenance tasks, create email campaigns, and understand member behaviour both inside and outside the club.

For the exerciser, we have a Halo Fitness App, which lets exercisers set up and track fitness goals and sync their workouts with the device and screen, interact with trainers, and sign up for classes. Exercisers can also pull all of their fitness trackers into one dashboard.

How does it differ from existing club management systems?

Two of the features our customers love are the Retain and Job Tracker. By integrating with more than



130 apps and wearables, Retain gives the operator a picture of what an exerciser is doing both inside and outside of the club, and creates an alert system when an exerciser has a decline in activity. Operators can then motivate and encourage members,

before they abandon their goals – and the club.

Job Tracker organises facility maintenance requests for everything – from fitness equipment upkeep to lightbulb replacement. Also, it lets operators load staff into the system and assign tasks to them throughout the day (with notifications), or create a custom preventative plan. Halo keeps a log of all this activity in one easily accessible place.

How will clubs benefit from Halo?

One of the key points we're addressing is member retention. It's one of the biggest challenges operators face, with clubs losing members at a rate of 30 per cent a year.

The Halo Fitness App keeps members engaged

with their goals, but also grants the ability for operators to get custom data that will help an exerciser on their fitness journey. The Halo Fitness App is also offered with a custom branding option.

Why launch Halo now?

We see digital facility management as the future and we're now unleashing the ability for clubs to get data from their members to help them on their journey, and simplifying operations.

Halo is an important part of the platform Life Fitness is building and will be the platform via which we continue to release new innovations to the industry.

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



Directory

ARCHITECTS & DESIGNERS

zynk | INTERIOR
ARCHITECTURE
& DESIGN

zynkdesign.com

WWW.ZYNKDESIGN.COM

AV / SOUND

Lightmasters

- Wireless Cardio Cinema
- Wireless Audio for Spin Classes
- Full PA & AV systems
- LED & Fibre Optic Lighting Systems

Finance Package Available

info@lightmasters.co.uk
www.lightmasters.co.uk

lightmasters uk ltd.

WWW.LIGHTMASTERS.CO.UK

COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE



Legend

Call Legend today
0800 031 7009

legendware.co.uk

WWW.LEGENDWARE.CO.UK

COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE

WHATEVER YOUR SECTOR...



Need a management solution?
Get in touch and find out how you can start saving and making money, year after year...

EZ RUNNER

Management Software: made easy

0844 847 5827 www.ez-runner.com

WWW.EZ-RUNNER.COM

COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE



BrightLime

SHARPER WEB BASED
CLUB MANAGEMENT

0844 493 3696
info@brightlime.co.uk

WWW.BRIGHTLIME.CO.UK

COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE

A highly functional, constantly improving system, to manage most leisure environments

- Membership/CRM
- Activity & Class Bookings
- Course Management
- TII & Payment Systems
- Access Control
- Online Bookings & Sign-ups

Contact us on:
+44 (0)1423 873 873
www.sportsoft.co.uk

SPORTSOFT

WWW.SPORTSOFT.CO.UK

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Get Members.
Keep Members.

memberdrive by



Know more at
www.cfm.net or call
0115 777 3333

WWW.CFM.NET

DIRECT DEBIT COLLECTION



DFC

Bespoke Direct Debit Services

We do more than just collect your subscriptions

www.debitfinance.co.uk
sales@debitfinance.co.uk
01908 422 026

WWW.DEBITFINANCE.CO.UK

DIRECT DEBIT COLLECTION

DIRECT DEBIT www.harlandsgroup.co.uk **harlandsgroup**
the sports & leisure group

Maximum Revenue, Minimum Hassle

We don't just process your payments, we manage your memberships so you can manage your facilities more effectively...

- Maximise profitability
- Reduce admin time
- Unlock the potential in your staff
- Increase income

01444 449 157 sales@harlandsgroup.co.uk

WWW.HARLANDSGROUP.CO.UK

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

THE FUNCTIONAL FITNESS SPECIALISTS

Jordan™

+44 (0)1553 763285
jordanfitness.com
sales@jordanfitness.co.uk

WWW.JORDANFITNESS.COM

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

COMPLETE. FITNESS. SOLUTIONS.

2017 CATALOGUE NOW AVAILABLE
NEW LINES | ENHANCED RANGES

Physical

physicalcompany.co.uk 01494 769 222 sales@physicalcompany.co.uk

WWW.PHYSICALCOMPANY.CO.UK

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

ServiceSport

Service and sales of equipment

- Fitness Equipment Servicing
- Sportshall Servicing
- Equipment Sales
- Parts Sales

Call: 0845 402 2456 www.servicesport.co.uk
WWW.SERVICESPORT.CO.UK

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING / FLOORING

Regupol®

IMPACT SOUND INSULATION | GYM FLOORING

INFO@BERLEBURGER.DE • WWW.EVERROLL.BIZ BSW

WWW.EVERROLL.BIZ

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING / FLOORING

FLOORING SOLUTIONS

Wide range of flooring solutions
Sports & Technical
Freeweight & Functional Training
Group Fitness & Studio
Complementary gym floor design
No obligation visit & quote

Physical

01494 769 222 physicalcompany.co.uk sales@physicalcompany.co.uk

WWW.PHYSICALCOMPANY.CO.UK

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING / FLOORING

TARAFLEX
SPORTS

High Performance Fitness Flooring
Recognised Brand Trusted Quality

www.gerflor.co.uk **Gerflor**
the international

WWW.GERFLOR.CO.UK

LOCKERS / CHANGING ROOMS

CROWN Tel: 01803 555885
SPORTS LOCKERS Email: sales@crownsportslockers.co.uk
Web: www.crownsportslockers.co.uk

MORE THAN JUST LOCKERS
Changing Rooms - Treatment Rooms - Washrooms

WWW.CROWNSPORTSLOCKERS.CO.UK

LOCKERS / CHANGING ROOMS

FITLOCKERS

Quality Affordable Locker Room Solutions

T: 01923 770435

sales@fitlockers.co.uk www.fitlockers.co.uk

WWW.FITLOCKERS.CO.UK

LOCKERS / CHANGING ROOMS



RIDGEWAY
furniture manufacturing
ridgewayfm.com

tel 01525 384298 sales@ridgewayfm.com

WWW.RIDGEWAYFM.COM

LOCKERS / CHANGING ROOMS

- LOCKERS
- BENCHES
- PADLOCKS
- CUBICLES
- VANITIES
- SERVICING

Contact us today for further information

T: 0203 651 1500

E: info@safespacelockers.co.uk

www.safespacelockers.co.uk



SAFE SPACE
THE CHANGING ROOM EXPERTS

WWW.SAFESPACELOCKERS.CO.UK

SALES & MARKETING

memberdrive by 

**Want an extra 200 - 700
new members for free?**



**Get Members.
Keep Members.**

**member
drive** by



www.cfm.net



Call: 0115 777 3333

WWW.CFM.NET

RETAILS SOLUTIONS



0121 550 2700

sales@srsleisure.com

www.srsleisure.com

WWW.SRSLEISURE.COM

SOFTWARE



Club Assistant
Membership Software

TAC | The Assistant Company
www.tac.eu.com

WWW.TAC.EU.COM

THE NEPTUNE NAUTICALS



#COMESWIMWITHUS

SWIMWEAR AND ACCESSORIES FOR 0-9 YEARS

SUPPLIED EXCLUSIVELY BY

SRS
LEISURE
YOUR COMPLETE RETAIL SOLUTION

WWW.SRSLEISURE.COM • SALES@SRSLEISURE.COM • 0121 550 2700

PERFORMANCE RUNNING



SKILLRUN™

SKILLRUN™ shatters all expectations of what a treadmill can be. The first piece of running equipment that trains both sprinting power and cardio endurance thanks to its MULTIDRIVE TECHNOLOGY™ (patent pending), it will make you truly unbeatable. Discover more: technogym.com/skillrun

TECHNOGym

The Wellness Company