

LIVE VS DIGITAL

Bryce Hastings
shares the
latest research

p70

Dan Edwardes

CEO, Parkour Generations

on partnering
with Gymbox p16

Shane Collins

We're aiming
to be the
global leader in
micro-studios

p22

Rainer Usselman

It's all about
immersive
wellness

p28

ON THE COVER

Dan Summerson

MD of Everlast Gyms

We want to become number one in the UK p40



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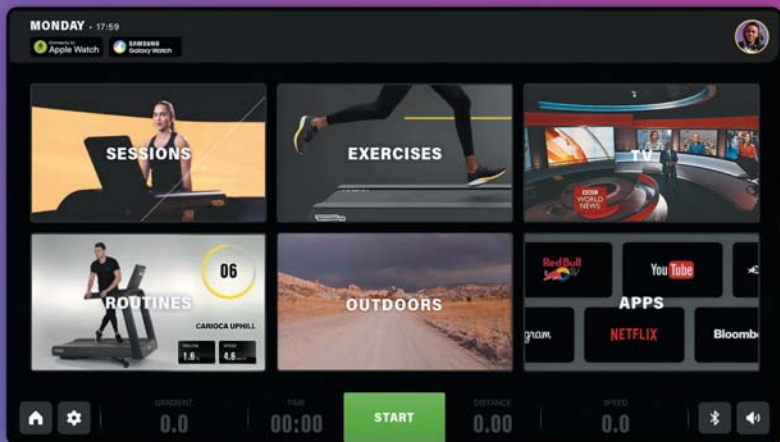
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Global impact

The urgent need to represent the industry to governments globally has led to the commissioning of a new report into its impact on GDP by the Global Health and Fitness Alliance

Lobbying bodies and organisations representing the health and fitness sector around the world have been facing the consequences of the appalling lack of knowledge of the sector among political leaders and decision-makers.

This challenge has been compounded by the industry's lack of accurate data about its economic impact, leading to numerous cases where financial support has gone to other sectors, but not ours, post-lockdown reopenings have been delayed and opportunities for collaboration have been denied.

Seeing the need for hard data to make the case for the sector, the Global Health and Fitness Alliance – led at the time by Greg Oliver – commissioned Deloitte to undertake a global review of its economic impact – especially in relation to health – with IHRSA swinging in behind the initiative to give support with logistics.

The result, published this month, is a substantial piece of research called *Economic Health and Societal Wellbeing: Quantifying the Impact of the Global Health and Fitness Sector*, which is reviewed by HCM's managing editor, Frances Marcellin, on page 64.

Surveying 46 countries which represent 90 per cent of the global health and fitness market, the research team found the combination of direct and indirect impact on the global economy was US\$91.22bn* a year.

Deloitte said: "Not only does the industry employ millions of people around the world and generate billions in value-added to GDP, but it also has an incredibly positive influence on health outcomes. In doing so it collectively saves billions in healthcare costs, while also giving productivity benefits."

Each of the 46 countries gets its own breakdown, with figures to indicate the amount of investment needed to convert a sedentary person to be active and the economic value of doing this over their lifetime.

The research makes compelling reading and will be a powerful lobbying tool when it comes to transacting with governments and advocating for the sector as we come out of the pandemic.



PHOTO: YURIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Each person converted to exercise boosts GDP globally

Deloitte's research found the health and fitness industry has an overall impact on the global economy of US\$91.22bn a year

The task now is to keep pushing forward, to get these numbers in front of decision-makers where they can be used to make the case for change while elevating the reputation of the sector.

We must also fund this research on an ongoing basis, repeating and building on it to ensure we develop a robust set of global numbers with which to drive the sector towards realising its potential.

This means refining it following feedback from policymakers, for example, and tracking change to evidence ongoing and increasing impact as time goes by.

Liz Terry, editor
lizterry@leisuremedia.com

*includes some double counting

HCM CONTENTS

Uniting the world of fitness

ISSUE 6 2022 No 303

70 Live vs digital?
The results are in...

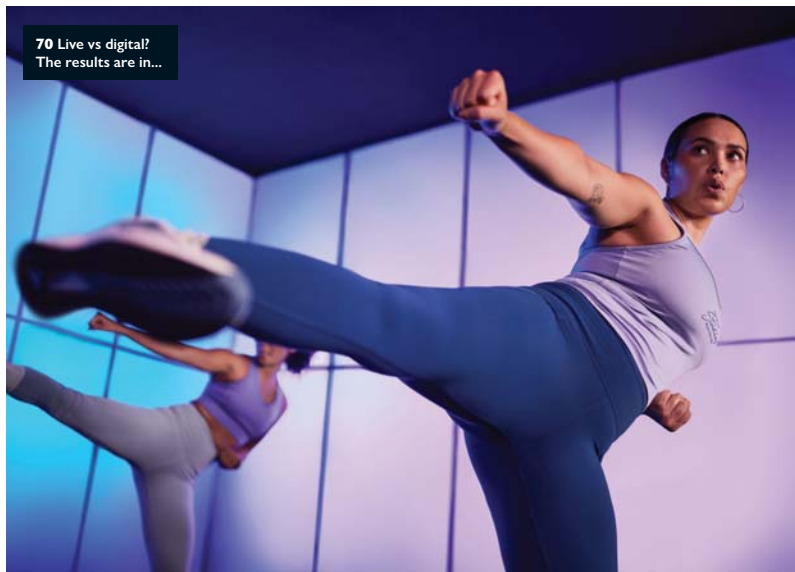


PHOTO: ILS MILLS

05 Editor's letter

Deloitte's latest report on the impact of the fitness sector on global GDP is a powerful lobbying tool

12 Write to reply

We hear from Muir Gray of the Living Longer Better Programme, Dave Stalker of EuropeActive and Chris Hebblewhite of GLL

16 HCM people **Dan Edwardes**

The founder of Parkour Generations discusses the company's partnership with Gymbox – the first of its kind – and why other operators might want to consider movement-based programmes

22 HCM people

Shane Collins

The fitness entrepreneur and founder of Circuit Society tells us how he plans to bring a new style of neighbourhood-based micro studios to the market

28 HCM people

Rainer Usselman

The co-founder of Happy Finish explains how the future of fitness could look with 'digital-first' wellness prescriptions and fully immersive experiences

32 HCM news

Basic-Fit opens its 600th club in France, and Barry's breaks into retail with an in-store studio deal with Frasers

40 Interview

Dan Summerson

The MD of Everlast Gyms is steering the business through a process of rebranding, with a hybrid model intended to take it to UK number one status

52 Ask the experts **Exercise progression**

How can operators ensure members feel a continual sense of improvement that keeps them coming back for more?

64 Deep impact

A new report by Deloitte highlights the far-reaching impact of the fitness industry on the global economy and GDP and on people's health outcomes



PHOTO: CIRCUIT SOCIETY

22 Shane Collins launches Circuit Society



PHOTO: DAN SUMMERSON/EVERLAST GYMS

40 Dan Summerson, Everlast Gyms

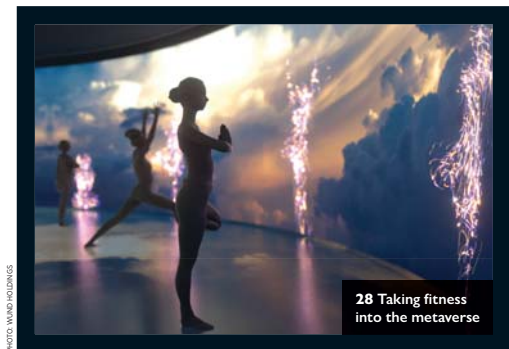


PHOTO: WAND HOLDINGS

28 Taking fitness into the metaverse



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ANJUN

52 The power of progression

70 Live vs digital

Do people get fitter working out at home or in the gym and do they have a preference? Researcher Bryce Hastings reports on the latest research seeking to answer these questions

74 Active workforce

The fitness and activity sectors have the power to transform the workforce and save employers and the economy billions, according to a new study

84 Small but mighty

Small group training is more popular than ever, driven by supply-side innovation and consumer choice, as Frances Marcellin discovers

90 Product innovation

A look at the latest product launches, including the new Biostrength training solution from Technogym, AI-powered 'intelligent' dumbbells from Kabata, an isokinetic/isotonic offering from Speede Fitness and new software from Magicline

93 Research Heart healing

Research from a Melbourne University shows that heart patients can start benefitting from resistance training as little as two weeks on from their surgery to significantly shorten their recovery time

97 HCM directory



PHOTO: PARKOUR GENERATIONS

16 Dan Edwardes

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LesMILLS



*Source: 2021 Global Fitness Report, Les Mills

MASTER MOTIVATION, REAP THE REWARDS

With 85% of gym members now also working out at home, the challenge that clubs face is maintaining member attendance at the gym.

Those who do 3+ Les Mills classes per week stay members of their club 50% longer than those who don't do classes – that's an extra 9.8 months per member. Put simply, group fitness members are among the most valuable type of customer you can have.

How is your club creating motivating experiences to help drive member retention?

Write to reply

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

The industry is underselling its impact and scope

Muir Gray

The Living Longer Better Programme

It was great to see the words 'mental health' on the cover of *HCM* (HCM issue 5 2022) because the fitness industry and all its professionals are underselling their offer significantly by using the term 'physical activity'.

At The Living Longer Better Programme (www.livelongerbetter.uk), we now only use the phrase 'activity PCE' (physical, cognitive and emotional) to describe the Active Partnerships' offer.

Activity that's physical directly affects the brain and reduces the risk of dementia, as we describe in our book, *Increase your Brainability and Reduce your Risk of Dementia*. It also increases people's emotional



wellbeing, particularly if done in groups. Just look at the number of smiles in the *HCM* photos! So, down with physical activity and up with activity PCE.

“

It was great to see the words 'mental health' on the cover of HCM



Read the May issue of HCM
www.hcmmag.com

Exercise increases people's emotional wellbeing, particularly if done in groups





The EC and Europe Active are collaborating to get more people active

EuropeActive is joining forces with the European Commission to encourage activity

David Stalker
EuropeActive

I'm thrilled to see #BeActive day running again on Friday 23 September, during the European Week of Sport (23 - 30 September).

This initiative has become the biggest drive by the sector to celebrate and promote the fun and importance of regular physical activity. The results have demonstrated how resilient and engaged the sector has become, with thousands of events and millions of participants across Europe and beyond every year.

#BeActive day is a collaboration between Europe Active and its 17 national association partners, who will be hosting thousands of free events and activities, and we encourage every key player in the sector to contact their national association and organise an event centered around physical activity.

The success of the #BeActive day campaign has contributed to the European Commission's recognition

of the European fitness and physical activity sector as an essential partner for the promotion of active, healthy lifestyles for all Europeans.

Europe Active is joining forces with the European Commission to encourage Europeans to be more active, to improve their general health and wellbeing, and to make the most of the Commission's HealthyLifestyle4All campaign.

As the main representative of the European fitness and physical activity sector, we firmly believe #BeActive day improves how our sector is perceived by policy and decision-makers, strengthening our case for recognition as a public health solution. Furthermore, the campaign is an opportunity to not only to bring members back to clubs, but also to generate new leads and engage with new customers.

This initiative fits like a glove with our ambition of getting more people, more active, more often. More: www.beactiveday.eu
www.hcmmag.com/healthylifestyle4all



PHOTO: EUROPE ACTIVE/ZONE

“

*We firmly believe
#BeActive day
improves how
our sector is
perceived by
policymakers*



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ANDREW BUSINESS IMAGES

GLL is working to make pools safer using technology



“
GLL is
expanding the
use of assisted
lifeguarding
technology

Let's all make pools safer

Chris Hebblewhite
GLL

The summer holidays are nearly upon us and more people will soon be enjoying the UK's pools and lidos.

While lifeguarded pools are inherently safer than unsupervised locations, we can always do more to enhance safety at managed swimming facilities.

This year GLL, the UK's largest public pools operator with 130 pools – and swim school provider with 130,000 children in swim school and 200,000 in school swimming lessons – is rolling out an expansion of assisted lifeguarding technology (ALT) in 10 more pools across England and Northern Ireland.

The approach blends the benefits of both leading-edge technology and human interaction, backed up by GLL's signature bespoke training, which we believe to be the best-in-class.

The system and software technology is designed to assist lifeguards by constantly monitoring water-based activity, detecting swimmers in distress in submersion incidents and spotting potential drownings and medical episodes – so helping with the safe management of customers and reducing the risk of lifeguard human error.

We've set ourselves a target of introducing ALT into all suitable pool settings within the next 10 years and we'd like the wider sector to follow our example by pledging to do the same.

We've consulted sector bodies including BSI, RLSS and UK Active in relation to our plans, and are happy to discuss them with other leisure providers wanting to find out more.

Working together we can make pools safer for everyone. ●



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Working in partnership with



HCM people



*Our partnership
with Gymbox is
a world first*

Dan Edwardes

CEO/founder Parkour Generations



Edwardes has
privately funded the
company's growth

Tell us about the partnership between Parkour Generations and Gymbox

We operate two models when implementing parkour with any partner – be it a gym, school or sports centre.

The first is direct coaching – we provide Parkour Generations' coaches to lead classes at partner venues. This is an quick, effective way for partners to bring parkour into their venues, as our coaches are good at teaching in any setting or environment and with any audience.

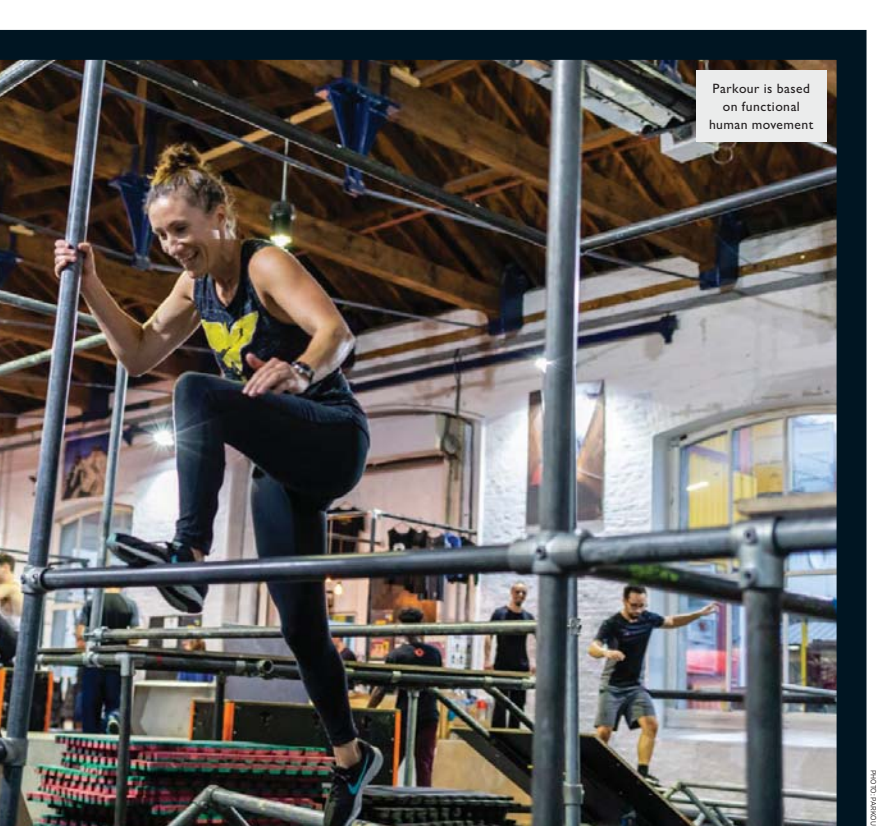
The limitations of this model are location and availability – the venues have to be close enough to our coaching operations, as we only have so many coaches.

That's why the second model – known as Parkour Programs (www.parkourprograms.com) is more accessible and efficient over the long-term. We train up our partner's own staff to lead sessions themselves, then provide ongoing support and updates to the programming.

With Gymbox we began with the direct coaching model, as their venues are London-based and within reach of our coaching operations, but with the aim of moving to Parkour Programs in due course.

This is a first for the health club sector – do you see this as a step towards mainstream acceptance?

Over the years we've been approached by many health club operators, both in the UK and internationally, but

A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a black tank top with a yellow graphic and black leggings, is captured mid-action on a metal parkour structure. She is smiling and looking down at her feet as she balances on a horizontal bar. The background shows a large indoor space with wooden beams and other people in the distance.

Parkour is based
on functional
human movement

most don't have to step outside the box that much. It takes creativity, courage and the will to embrace innovation for a gym chain to move the needle and implement non-traditional training methods.

The irony, of course, is that parkour is probably the most traditional of all physical training methods, as it's simply functional human movement over terrain – something our species has been doing since we came down from the trees. Certainly it's the most natural.

What's involved in a standard parkour session?

Our classes at Gymbox are 45 or 60 minutes in length, and involve a whole-body workout, utilising a combination of skill acquisition and general physical literacy development. A highly active, mobility-based warm up gets things going and then

each class focuses on one or two of our 'family groups' of movement for the main movement training element, followed by an intense 'finisher' activity utilising those same movement skills.

We always end with active recovery, based on stretching, breathing and myofascial release to restore balance before participants head home.

No two classes are ever the same – this forces variability and adaptation, which is the best way to train the body and mind.

Can the sessions run inside?

Sessions are all based out of Gymbox venues and mostly run indoors, but in good weather we take groups outside to train at nearby spaces.

One of the reasons we agreed to partner with Gymbox was their open-mindedness

and willingness to explore new ways of getting people fit, moving and healthy.

There's so much data supporting the multiple benefits of taking your training outdoors – particularly from the standpoint of mental health.

As Gymbox members become more confident with the idea, they can then also choose to join our existing outdoor classes at Parkour Generations across London, which provide twice the amount of practice time – great for those who really want to go deeper into parkour.

How long is Gymbox committed?

It's an open-ended partnership, so we'll continue as long as it's effective for both parties, which is the rule we have for all our partnerships.

How successful has it been to date?

So far the results have been great, with Gymbox members telling us they love the training and are desperate for more. Success for us is rated by the positive effect we're having on people's lives. So as long as we see good evidence of that we consider a project a success.

How global are you?

We have five international branches and multiple facilities and academies under those, from Brazil to the USA to South Korea and China.

Are there similar operations in other territories?

This partnership is a world first – a formal collaboration between a major health club operator and us, the world's largest parkour organisation, doesn't exist anywhere else.

As I said, we've had many approaches – including in the USA and across Asia – and we've implemented the parkour programmes in individual clubs and independent boutique gyms, but very few large gym operators have the vision and, dare I say it, the guts to climb out of their existing paradigm and try something new.

Gymbox is a fantastic partner, in that they 'get it'. They're not afraid to try something new, to take that risk and introduce a different way of training to their members. Their attitude and philosophy resonates with our own, so we're very happy to work with them – and the real beneficiaries are their members, of course.



Parkour Generations has built a global network of operations



The fitness industry is seeing a trend towards fundamental human movement



Why should operators consider parkour?

On the simplest level, because it works. It's an incredibly fun, efficient, and engaging way to get fit, healthy, agile, mobile, functionally strong, mentally resilient, creative and self-reliant. As an added bonus, you also burn a huge number of calories doing parkour.

It's not a gimmick or fad, it's based entirely on natural human motor patterns and helps people reach a level of movement capability they never thought possible.

The fitness industry is seeing a general evolution towards true movement practices. People are much better educated around health and longevity and they're seeking more sophisticated, more challenging and more engaging practice.

Parkour is a huge part of that movement – no other discipline asks quite as much of you physically and psychologically and yet is simultaneously so naturally playful and child-like in its practice. In truth, it's the fact it builds on our innate desire to play and move that makes it so effective.

Any health club or gym can implement our parkour programmes at scale. It's the future of fitness, but in a sense, it's also us just restoring the past – after all, this is how all humans have moved since the dawn of time, and how most physical training occurred, incredibly successfully, prior to the 20th century.



People are better educated around health and longevity and seeking more sophisticated, challenging and engaging practices

Are there more parkour partnerships on the horizon?

There's a lot in the works. We've partnered with London's largest climbing wall – HarroWall (www.hcmmag.com/HarroWall) – and have built an indoor parkour facility there.

We're also on the verge of opening our own second London venue, which will be a unique fitness space in East India Docks, London as part of the Republic London development. It will be the heart of practical movement training in London.



We're designing a huge indoor centre for a client in Saudi Arabia, as well as three outdoor public movement spaces in London

Where else are you planning to build?

We design and build parkour and movement facilities regularly for all kinds of clients – our design department has been creating parkour structures both indoors and out for over ten years now.

We're currently designing a huge indoor centre for a client in Saudi Arabia, as well as three outdoor public movement spaces for London borough councils. We're passionate about making space that encourages movement, play, fitness and exploration for the communities that inhabit them.

How is Parkour Generations funded?

By hard work and creative vision! We're a private company (Edwardes is sole owner) that has grown up organically, using its own resources. We're not funded by anyone and have built everything ourselves

What's your dream future?

We've pioneered practical movement training since 2006 and taken it all over the world, and it's been

a huge process of educating authorities, industries, education bodies, and people on every continent.

We've opened so many doors, we're now at the stage where we're looking to scale massively and to be able to share the benefits of our movement practice with many more people and help bring an authentic simplicity back to health, fitness and physical potential. That's what parkour does and the modern world badly needs it.

I'd like to see every school in the world have this tool to restore physical literacy and to reward kids for moving more, to normalise play again and to encourage positive engagement with risk.

I'd like every gym to be able to help people start using their bodies and minds for the evolutionary function of movement, alongside the simple strength and fitness development. And I'd like people to have spaces in their cities which allow them to move and explore and encourage curiosity rather than limiting their options. I hope we can do our part in helping that become a reality. ●
More: www.parkourgenerations.com



Every school should have parkour 'to develop physical literacy'

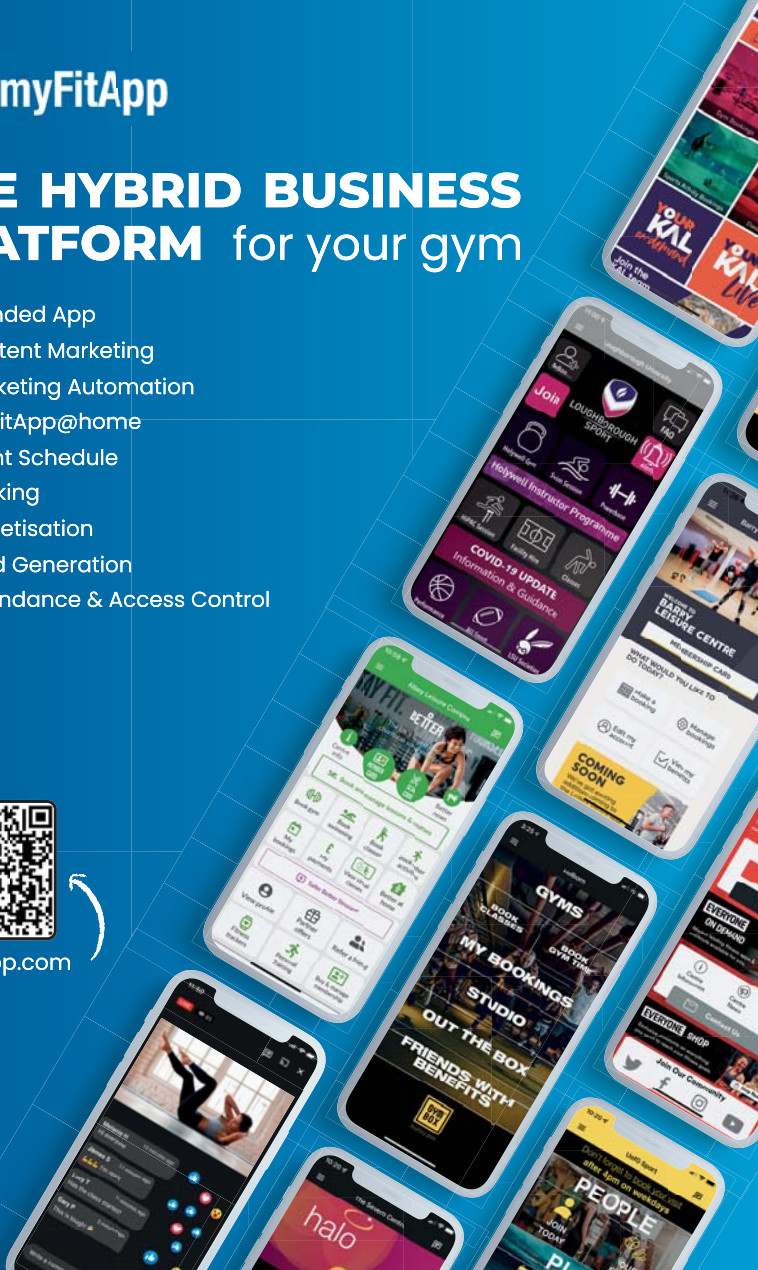


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*We want to be the global
market leader in micro-studios*

Shane Collins

Founder, Circuit Society



Collins was a co-founder of boutique boxing studio Kobox

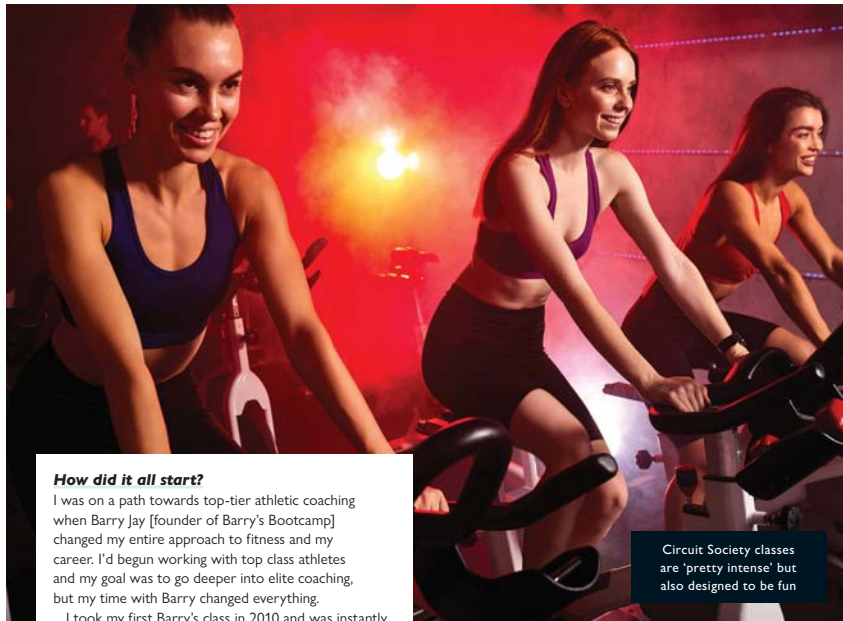


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/JFABR2010

How did it all start?

I was on a path towards top-tier athletic coaching when Barry Jay [founder of Barry's Bootcamp] changed my entire approach to fitness and my career. I'd begun working with top class athletes and my goal was to go deeper into elite coaching, but my time with Barry changed everything.

I took my first Barry's class in 2010 and was instantly hooked. At the time, the boutique fitness market didn't really exist outside of the US and was tightly confined to LA and New York, and the concept drew me in.

Running was my sport, and I instantly saw what Barry was doing – making running accessible and fun. The people going to Barry's class weren't runners, in fact they probably wouldn't ever run if Barry's didn't exist.

How did that experience influence your career?

I was a co-founder of boutique studio Kobox and we did the same thing – took the sport of boxing to a group of people who were too scared to try it until we made it fun, safe and accessible.

Now I'm doing the same thing with the launch of micro studio franchise concept, Circuit Society.

Tell us about Circuit Society

We think that there's space for a market leader in offering smaller, neighbourhood-based, micro-studios across the world. We want to be that leader.

Our circuit classes are pretty intense, they're tough, but we're always searching for ways to bring truly effective classes to people in the most accessible and fun way possible.

It's easy for any studio to deliver a really tough workout, but it's a real skill to do it in a way that makes



Giving people the best hour of their day is our north star as a business

people feel as though they belong to something, and more importantly, in a way that makes it truly enjoyable.

Your goal is to give people the 'best hour of their day'

It's our north star as a business. The workout is important, but so is having somebody know your name, remember your favourite protein shake, or allocate you your favourite spot in class without you having to ask.

All successful boutique studios are part gym, part social club. If people choose to spend any of their scarce free time with us, we want to deliver on all fronts.

What's the vibe?

It's like a mini-nightclub. We have dark lighting to help make people comfortable

and a sound system that allows customers to immerse themselves in the experience.

We're not into screaming and shouting at people, we find that the best energy comes from the clients themselves, putting a group of people together and using lights and music to encourage them usually brings out the best in people. The energy is infectious, and it often changes everyone in the room.

What are the biggest barriers to people using boutiques?

Fear is always the biggest barrier, it doesn't matter what the concept is. Fear that the class will be too difficult, that they may not be fit enough. Mostly they're irrational fears.

We try to combat those fears by making classes as fun as possible. The lighting system allows people to get lost in the room and let go of any inhibitions they may have and the music helps with that too.

How many are now open?

In the UK, our Camden studio is open, with Bayswater and St Albans due to open in Summer. The first studio is approximately 800sq ft and can accommodate 24 people.

When will you go global?

We've just signed a master franchise agreement for Dubai, and have had incredible interest from potential franchisees in relation to studios in Dubai. It's a great location for us to open.

London to Dubai is the busiest flight route in the world at the moment, and that gives us the ability to grow in the region and use some of our brand awareness in the UK to aid that growth. There's further interest from other regions within the UAE and the rest of the Middle East and having a master franchisee with overall responsibility for the region allows us to do better deals than managing that process from the UK.

What is Circuit Society's USP as a franchisee?

Our concept is very simple. That makes it effective as a workout and it also makes it flexible and scalable from a potential franchisee's perspective.

Most other fitness franchise businesses have a very fixed model in terms of property requirements and studio size. That rules a lot of people out of the market, as it simply isn't accessible to them. We have six stations, so in theory we can open studios in any multiple of six that suits the location and the potential franchisee.



The micro studio concept is made up of six stations

Lights and music set the scene for in-class group energy



Classes will be a place where instructors get to know members well



AL PHOTO COURTESY SOCIETY



Circuit Society is aiming for a 'mini-nightclub' vibe



The world has changed since the start of the pandemic. We're much more neighbourhood-orientated

We're in discussion with potential franchisees for sites as small as 12-person capacity, all the way up to 42-person capacity. We really can bring this concept to every town and village in the UK and beyond, and allow people to become business owners.

Why micro-studios?

It's a reaction to what we believe the market wants. The world has changed since the start of the pandemic. We're much more neighbourhood-oriented.

London has always been a city in transit, but now, with the work-from-home changes, it's less so. We believe people want to spend less time commuting for work – or any other activity for that matter – and convenience is key, so we want to bring them what they want, close to home. I think that outside London, the UK is still really underserved when it comes to quality fitness concepts.

Investing £1m in a 60-person studios doesn't make sense in more regional areas, but that shouldn't mean that quality studios can't exist. In our previous business, the cost of providing the standard of studio required was a big hurdle. Sites of £1m are a big risk, but this model is cheaper and much more accessible for potential franchisees.

Why did you decide to franchise?

The fitness industry is a people industry. I think what makes fitness studios unique and different is the personal touch – knowing the people who run the business and forging strong relationships. The curse of growth is that you start to lose that.

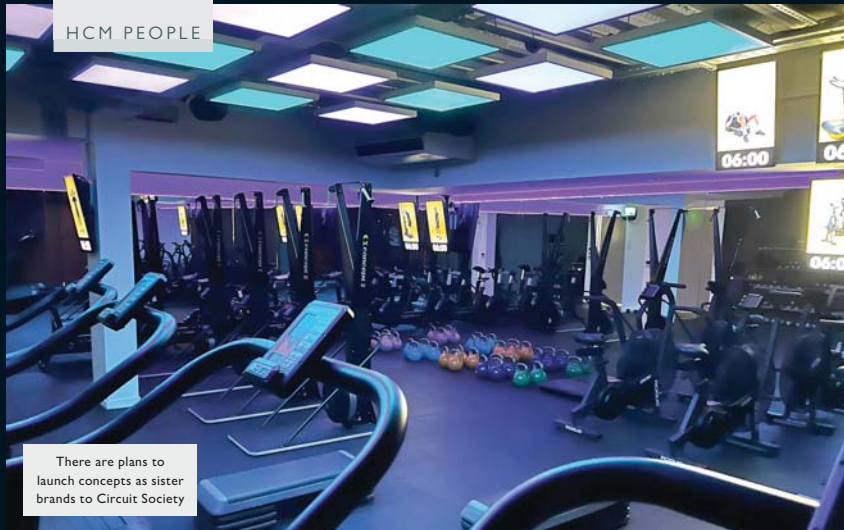
With a franchise model, we can scale the business by enabling other people to become owners, and maintain that personal touch. It will mean more to those who own the business, rather than being employees of a bigger corporate machine. It's a win for the customer, and that's the most important thing.

What support do you give franchisees?

Our Bayswater franchisee is benefiting from our start-up funding model, where we provide funding to potential franchisees to help towards start-up costs and that's repaid monthly over the first two years. We also provide HQ staff over the first two years to help operate the studio.

Is the £20 monthly member fee sustainable?

The membership model is different from other fitness studios. Typically, there are two models; pay-as-you-go, and monthly memberships.



There are plans to launch concepts as sister brands to Circuit Society



Circuit Society is scalable, as opening and operating costs are significantly lower

Ours is a hybrid model. For £20, our members receive access to our on-demand digital classes, and also receive up to 40 per cent discount on pay-as-you-go class packages and 20 per cent discount on shakes, apparel and water. It's essentially a loyalty scheme.

There's a range of pricing – for example, single classes for members cost £18, with non-members paying £22. Members pay £180 for 30 classes, while non-members pay £300 (www.circuitsociety.fit/pages/buy).

First Kobox, now Circuit Society... you're a fitness entrepreneur – do you have more business ideas?

Yes, of course! We've also launched a health supplement business called NUA Health (www.nua.health), and we see that as being a vertical business within the whole Circuit Society ecosystem.

The NUA Health business will offer our customers supplement products that they're able to trust to create an upsell for the operating business.

We also have plans to launch other concepts as sister brands to Circuit Society and bring all of these ideas and concepts together under a digital offering within 12 months – so there's lots still to come.

Is there a link between you exiting Kobox and going micro with Circuit Society?

Kobox was an incredible business and I'm very proud of everything we achieved while I was involved, but scaling a business like that is difficult in the UK.

The appetite from investors when it comes to risking large amounts of capital on studios and on the branding and marketing required, just doesn't compare with what's possible elsewhere in the world, especially the US.

Circuit Society is more scalable – our opening and operating costs are significantly lower – and we can reach more parts of the UK due to both of those factors. From the outside they may look like very similar businesses, but they're markedly different models. ●

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Digital therapeutics could offer digital-first wellness ‘prescriptions’, digital ‘treatments’ and curated content to alter mood and improve wellbeing

Rainer Usselmann

Co-founder, Happy Finish





The aim is for immersive wellness to make guests see and feel in new ways

PHOTO: WANG POLONIOS



PHOTO: HARRY FENSH

Usselmann is redefining immersive experiences

What trends do you see driving change in the fitness and wellness sector?

Wellness is undergoing a momentous digital transformation – from the music industry pivoting to ‘wellness’ music to new technologies that capture our biometric data to create personalised, healing breathwork. We’re entering the era of adaptive, personalised digital wellbeing solutions.

You’re working with Thermengruppe Josef Wund to create new services – what will these look like?

It’s all about immersive wellness. We’re developing a number of different technologies such as instructor-led or self-guided classes against changing, spectacular backdrops. These are delivered on room-sized curved screens in immersive, biophilic environments and also multisensory chroma yoga, enabled with motion tracking-based feedback.

The aim is for immersive wellness to make guests see, feel and experience in a new and multisensory way.

Tell us more about Thermengruppe Josef Wund

It’s a German company, that designs, develops and operates wellness resorts that combine the ancient tradition of thermal baths with the thrills of a modern waterpark, with a wide range of health and wellbeing options, such as yoga classes and workouts available and healthy food options.

These are all set within very large, architecturally spectacular, light-filled, biophilic spaces full of real vegetation and hundreds of giant palm trees. The resorts offer guests a unique wellbeing proposition,

Two million guests currently visit Wund's wellness destinations each year



It became clear there was an opportunity to extend our collaboration beyond a single VR project – going beyond the physical and into the metaverse

Germany's largest wellbeing resort, in Bad Vilbel, will open in 2023



PHOTO THERME GROUP

a refuge from the stresses of daily life and a holiday destination that's just a short commute away.

How did the partnership come about?

When Thermengruppe Josef Wund approached us in early 2019, it was initially to develop a collaboration for our Virtual Reality SkySlide product, that we'd launched on the viewing platform of the Shard in London two years before (www.spabusiness.com/skyslide).

However, during the course of our initial conversations, it quickly became clear that there was an opportunity to extend our collaboration beyond a single VR project, and look at ways of widening Wund's core proposition beyond the physical and into the metaverse.

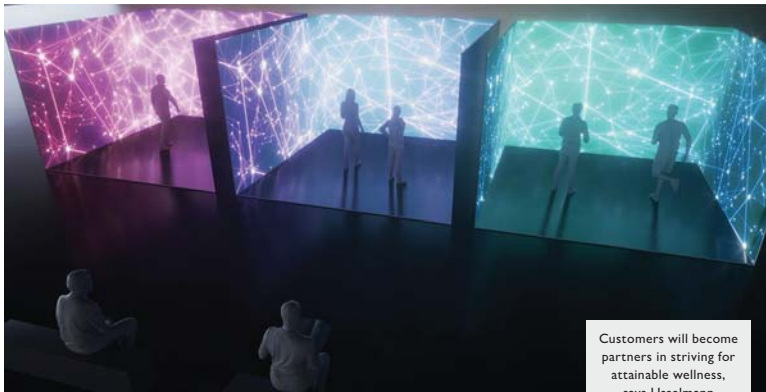
How did the partnership develop?

Under the working title 'Therme in your pocket', we began a series of work-streams to establish and define how a digital 'experiential' layer could be added to their customer journey to meaningfully extend what was on offer in bricks and mortar; how we could enable digital and physical services for enhanced wellbeing, on site, on the go, at home and at work.

At the discovery phase, we researched the market for digitally-enabled wellbeing services from blockbuster Apps such as Calm, as well as trends – for example, the quantified/optimised self and health metrics. What became clear, very quickly, was the need to differentiate the new offer, and the vision of the service that Wund would bring to the market from more generic wellbeing propositions.

What direction did you head in?

We had to be clear about the specific and evolving needs and expectations of Wund's core audience. Supported by a process of user and stakeholder



Customers will become partners in striving for attainable wellness, says Usselmann



PHOTO: WUND BELONGS

interviews, we arrived at a few key considerations. While the general wellness market has seen exponential growth, particularly in the shape of global, self-serve wellness apps, either VC-funded, or from tech incumbents, we wanted to ensure that Wund's offer was more authentic, more connected with their physical sites and services and their local and regional audiences.

How are you making it different?

With two million guests visiting Wund resorts annually, there's a real gap for products and services that can meaningfully extend the company's service offer and brand.

This presents a unique opportunity for a credible presence built on a well-established ecosystem within an otherwise increasingly crowded and generic wellness market.

The need for heightened focus on health and wellbeing has never been more acute. The pandemic has pushed narratives centre-stage that had been on the margins before, such as mental health, burnout, work-life balance, nutrition and so on.

What will the new services look like?

Digital therapeutics could offer digital-first wellness 'prescriptions', digital 'treatments' and curated content to alter mood and improve wellbeing. Our roadmap for Wund's on-site and off-site programming will follow two key principles:

1. Immersive Wellness Solutions

These will deliver evidence-based wellness, combined with immersive technology to create interactive installations, experiential relaxation programmes and products.

2. The importance of community

We want to support Wund's community to transform anxiety, support healthier lifestyles, and improve productivity. This will happen by building a community around wellness and technology, supporting a transition from a transactional proposition to the consumer becoming partners in striving for attainable wellness.

And what effects will they have?

These emerging 'digital nutrition' tools categorise content based on its proven ability to evoke six core emotions or mood groups: calm, confidence, connection, energy, focus and happiness. These moods are linked to the activity of neurotransmitters and hormones, such as GABA, dopamine, oxytocin, endorphins, acetylcholine, and serotonin.

How do you see the future of digital wellness?

Wellbeing needs redefining now that being digital has become a 'thing'. We're excited to be part of the redefinition of how meaningful immersive experiences can add value and a sense of wellbeing to people, whether they're at home, at work, on the go or at play. We think of it as wellbeing remixed for the age of the metaverse. ●

Quarter of Americans now health club members

More than one in four (27 per cent) Americans belonged to a health club or studio in 2021, with the total number of fitness membership reaching 66.5 million.

The figures, from industry body IHRSA, represent 3.8 per cent growth over the past two years (since 2019) and are the highest ever recorded.

Liz Clark, IHRSA president and CEO, said: "It's a clear indication of the importance of the bricks and mortar component of the fitness industry that growth returned despite



27 per cent of Americans belonged to a health club or studio in 2021



It's a clear indication of the importance of fitness that growth returned despite lockdowns

Liz Clark

the lockdown of clubs, the severe governmental restrictions imposed, and the surge in digital offerings.

"It's also a strong testament to the value of clubs and studios, the importance of community, the quality of in-person instruction, and the expansive offerings of the on-site experience."

The number of total visits decreased from 6.7bn in 2019 to 4.5bn, while, the average number of annual visits to clubs per individual fell from 109 to 72, largely as a result of pandemic-related government mandated closures which impacted clubs during this time.

More: http://lei.sr/2C5W8_H

Obesity causes 1.2m premature deaths a year



The findings come from the WHO European Regional Obesity Report

According to The World Health Organization's recently-released research study, *WHO European Regional Obesity Report 2022*, a third of children and almost two-thirds of adults in Europe are obese.

The research found obesity causes 1.2m deaths each year across WHO's 53 member states in Europe.

Researchers recorded a drop in physical activity levels during the pandemic, along with an increased intake of fatty, sugary and salty foods, but, although obesity levels were amplified by the pandemic, their cause runs far deeper in society.

"Obesity poses an increasing challenge in Europe, with one in three school-aged children, one in four adolescents and almost 60 per cent of the adult population now



Obesity poses an increasing challenge in Europe, with a third of schoolchildren now overweight

Henri Kluge

living with being overweight or obese," explained Dr Hans Henri Kluge, WHO's regional director for Europe. "Raised body mass index (BMI) is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases, including cancers and cardiovascular diseases."

More: http://lei.sr/j6z7_H

Fitness contributes US\$91.22bn a year globally

A new report by Deloitte, outlining the social and economic value of the global health and fitness industry, has been released by The Global Health & Fitness Alliance (GHFA), in collaboration with IHRSA.

The 418-page document – *Economic health and societal wellbeing: quantifying the impact of the global health and fitness sector* – outlines the impact of the health and fitness industry on GDP and healthcare systems worldwide, as well as specific activity in 46 countries and territories, which represent 90 per cent of the industry. It identified a total impact of up to US\$91.22bn per annum (some double counting has been identified in this number).

The premise of the report is that the industry is a major contributor to GDP and employment globally and that

its presence – through gyms, clubs and physical facilities – raises activity levels in the local community, which increases GDP and reduces healthcare costs.

By reviewing existing data, academic studies and industry reports, the authors have devised a way to indicate the economic impact of the industry, while also citing how much an inactive worker in each country or territory costs the economy.

This figure is key, because the report suggests that investing a similar amount in getting people active would generate benefits to GDP and the healthcare system, resulting in a payback to the economy after only one year.

• To read more about the report, turn to our feature article on page 64.

More: http://lei.sr/j6e7T_H



Deloitte assessed impact on GDP

Basic-Fit opens 600th club in France

Basic-Fit has opened its 600th club in France in Sablé-sur-Sarthe, in the Pays de la Loire region. The fitness chain – which is also active in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain – now operates 1,109 clubs and plans to launch its first location in Germany later this year. The company's long-term goal is to have 3,500 clubs by 2030.

"I'm proud we reached the 600th club milestone in France. With more new clubs in France and our



Basic-Fit opened its 600th gym in France and now operates 1,109 sites in Europe



We're on track to reach 1,250 clubs for the group by the end of 2022

Rene Moos

other countries opening this year, we're on track to reach 1,250 clubs for the group by the end of 2022," said CEO, René Moos. "Thanks to our high-value and affordable proposition, in France, but also in our other countries, we're witnessing a strong momentum for fitness."

According to Moos, anyone living in a French city with a population over

30,000 (apart from the Île de France region where Paris is located) can access at least one Basic-Fit club. The business targets the low-cost market with a monthly membership fee that starts at €19.99 for four weeks. Member sign-ups were up by 46 per cent in Q1, with 400,000 registrations.

More: http://lei.sr/t6T4m_H

Everyone Can task force to narrow inequalities

A special task force has been established to boost physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities.

Part of UK Active's inclusivity-focused Everyone Can programme, the task force will unite industry leaders, private operators and governing and representative bodies in partnership with organisations such as the Activity Alliance, Sport England, CIMSPA and the Swimming Teachers Association.

The task force will also have the ongoing support of current UK Active



A new industry task force is aiming to make exercise more inclusive



UK ACTIVE

The sector has a huge opportunity to help many more to enjoy the benefits of being active

Tanni Grey-Thompson

chair, Tanni Grey-Thompson, who will finish her tenure as chair at the end of July and is shortly to begin a new role as chair of Sport Wales.

Together they're aiming to support people with disabilities in meeting their physical activity targets; improving fitness facilities and access; enhancing customer service across leisure centres

and gyms; overcoming barriers; and developing ways to effectively capture data to increase understanding.

Grey-Thompson said: "The sector has a huge opportunity to help many more to enjoy the benefits of being active."

More: http://lei.sr/q9z5K_H

Ex-NHS chief Mike Farrar named UK active chair



UK ACTIVE

Mike Farrar replaces Tanni Grey-Thompson as chair

Mike Farrar has been announced as the new chair at UK Active. His tenure will start in August 2022 when he takes over the position from Tanni Grey-Thompson, following her six-year stint.

"I'm honoured to be named chair of UK Active and cannot wait to get started in delivering on the ambitious plans I've seen to grow the sector's impact and reach," said Farrar.

"There is huge synergy and opportunity to develop our plans for supporting improvement in the nation's health. Tanni has left a clear legacy as chair and I am passionate about continuing the work she has driven."

Farrar comes from a leadership background within the NHS, having stepped down as chief executive at

the NHS Confederation in 2013, while simultaneously serving as vice and interim chair of Sport England between 2009 and 2012.

After setting up his own consultancy business, where he continued his work in advisory roles with the NHS, he became chair at Swim England from 2015 to 2020.

In the lead-up to London 2012, Farrar was selected as national tsar for sports and health, a role which centred around motivating people towards better lifestyle habits through engagement with physical activity.

His appointment comes at a time when the physical activity industry and the national health agenda have become further entwined.

More: http://lei.sr/P8T3y_H

DLL introduces new upsell: small group training

David Lloyd has introduced a small group training programme called Delta to the range of classes it offers members.

The sessions are designed for six to eight people and incorporate progressive programming techniques to motivate participants and help them achieve their fitness goals.

"With their combination of team spirit and expert coaching, it's easy to see why group training classes are one of the most popular ways to stay fit," said Jake French, GM at David Lloyd. "The benefits can be magnified when a group is working through a progressive programme, guided by an expert coach."

Access to the classes requires an extra payment of £130/month on top of a member's standard package,

but once paid, members can access as many sessions they like, with three a week being recommended. Each Delta class lasts an hour and the equipment varies each session but can include Ybells, barbells and weight plates, as well as cardio kit such as rowing machines and assault bikes.

Once the warm-up is complete, the session progresses to mobility, using technique bars.

A focus on fundamental movements follows with exercises including deadlifts, squats and power cleans.

The main part of the session lasts up to 20 minutes and is built around a variety of exercises that build up strength, stamina and cardio capability. Every class ends with a warm-down.

More: http://lei.sr/S2P6v_H



Classes cost an additional £130/month

Barry's breaks into retail with studio in Flannels

Barry's has entered the world of retail, opening a studio in the new Flannels flagship luxury department store in Liverpool UK, which debuts today (23 June 2022).

The 7,000sq ft studio is located on the store's 'world of activewear' floor, centred around Barry's famous Red Room and accommodates up to 59 clients per class.

Barry's UK co-founder Sandy Macaskill says the company is back to 90 per cent capacity since the end of lockdown and has a new focus



Barry's has entered the retail sector by launching at Flannels' new luxury store



We've been driven from the start to shake up the status quo and move things along

Sandy Macaskill

on growth. He's inspired by how the fashion industry is constantly innovating and disrupting through big-name collaborations and is positioning Barry's to be part of this movement.

"Opening in Liverpool inside Flannels is a new way of bringing workouts in to a new community," said Macaskill.

"We've been driven from the start to shake up the status quo and move

things along, rather than doing what our peers are doing, which is why we brought Barry's to the UK from the US in the first place," he said.

Both brands will use the collaboration to test-drive clothing and equipment and host joint events for their customers.

More: http://lei.sr/v8G6g_H

Ultimate Performance launches London studio

Ultimate Performance (UP) – the private gym chain and PT business – has opened a new 4,700sq ft club in Canary Wharf's new Wood Wharf neighbourhood.

The club is the company's 21st launch, just ahead of another new property opening in the heart of Washington DC.

Like every gym in the network, the Canary Wharf site provides every member with customised one-on-one personal training, as



UP opened its 21st gym in Canary Wharf and will be launching in Washington DC



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Our methods are honed to deliver world-class results, with just 2.7 hours per week of gym time

Nick Mitchell

well as additional wellbeing guidance, including nutrition programmes, 24/7 support on diet adherence, stress management and sleep strategies.

Customers buy blocks of time rather than monthly access to the facilities and services.

"Canary Wharf is one of Europe's leading centres for finance, business

and tech – I used to work in the City, so understand the stresses and pain points of working there," says UP founder and global CEO, Nick Mitchell.

"We know time is money. Our methods deliver results, with just 2.7 hours per week of gym time."

More: http://lei.sr/P4d7h_H

F45 jumps into the hospitality market with Hilton



F45 will open a hotel-based studio at the Hilton Austin in Q3 2022

F45 will be launching its first studio in a hotel in Q3 2022, following a partnership agreement with Hilton Austin. The 1,236sq ft/114 sq m studio will deliver the 45-minute circuit workouts for which the brand is known.

"We're excited about our partnership with Hilton Austin, as it marks an important milestone in our ongoing efforts to make F45's high-powered classes accessible to more people," said Adam Gilchrist, president and CEO. "We're thrilled to bring the F45 experience to Hilton Austin's guests and to our members in the surrounding Austin community."

F45 classes are designed from a database of over 8,000 functional training movements, which work to standardise the company's

offering, but also keep sessions fresh and enjoyable for members.

Following the restrictions of the pandemic, F45 has sought to impact new industries and extended its network into new customer territories. In a partnership with OneSpaWorld – the luxury spa provider at sea – F45 launched on Celebrity Cruises' Apex in 2021 and earlier this year on new fitness-focused ship Beyond, as part of a push into the spa and wellness market.

"We're committed to finding new and innovative ways to offer what we consider to be the world's best workout to new and existing F45 members around the world," added Gilchrist.

More: http://lei.sr/j5W3C_H

Whoop pushes deeper into corporate wellbeing

Connected performance wearable company Whoop has launched Whoop Unite for business. Whoop has built up its business-to-business operation since undertaking a Series F funding round of US\$200m last August – when the tech unicorn was valued at US\$3.6bn. It now has 200 corporate customers, including Hitachi Vantara, the UK's NHS and

the US National Forest Service.

Initially aimed at elite athletes – LeBron James and Michael Phelps were among its first users – Whoop has become popular with consumers interested in improving their wellbeing through its sleep, stress and recovery metrics.

The Whoop Unite package acts like a digital health coach for



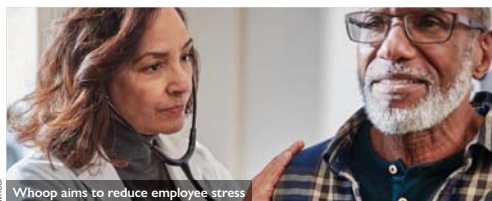
When I founded Whoop I dreamed of the best organisations relying on it

Will Ahmed

employees who can use Whoop to improve their overall health.

"When I founded Whoop in 2012, I dreamed of the world's best organisations relying on it to improve performance," said Whoop CEO Will Ahmed.

More: http://lei.sr/a5A3w_H



Whoop aims to reduce employee stress

UK Active sets out key milestones for its vision

Establishing new data and insight services and strengthening relationships with both government and the NHS are among UK Active's aims for 2022-23.

The industry body has published its ten strategic goals for the coming year, which also include delivering projects with Sport England, the launch of a new website and the rollout of The Active Standard, an industry kitemark for consumers.

The 10 milestones are part of UK Active's Vision 2030 strategy, which



UK Active is aiming to work more closely with the NHS



We want to be clear and transparent with our members about the set of milestones

Huw Edwards

maps out plans for growing and developing the physical activity sector through the rest of the decade.

CEO Huw Edwards said: "We want to be clear and transparent with our members about the set of milestones ahead for us as an organisation.

"Together with our members, we can not only navigate the current challenges facing the sector

but also lay the foundations for our growth and development across the rest of the decade.

Other goals include the improvement of membership engagement, which UK Active plans to achieve by implementing a new year-round member engagement strategy.

More: http://lei.sr/9A9j6_H

1Rebel opens revamped Sweat It London studio

Boutique fitness chain 1Rebel has opened the doors to its 10th club. Formerly the home of HIIT club Sweat It – which 1Rebel co-founder James Balfour bought from liquidators in February – it has since been refitted.

Located in London's Covent Garden, the studio's class schedule will focus on Reshape, which is one of five workouts – namely Rig, Reformer, Rumble and Ride – offered by the operator.



We're excited to add Covent Garden to the mix
James Balfour



1Rebel's trainers will run Reshape classes in the new Covent Garden club

"We're thrilled to be hitting such an exciting milestone with our 10th club, particularly as it's in such an iconic area of London," said Balfour.

"We're excited to add Covent Garden to the mix to give members more options, while reaching new members.

"The post COVID-19 lockdown journey has been challenging,

but our focus on the experience and providing more choice has allowed our Rebels to return and make fitness a priority," he said.

The studio is located at lower ground floor level near the main Covent Garden Piazza.

More: http://lei.sr/B5P9f_H

Could an 'exercise pill' offer workout benefits?



In those suffering from obesity, Lac-Phe suppressed food intake by half

Researchers have identified a molecule in the blood – produced during exercise – that can effectively reduce food intake and obesity.

The findings, published in the journal *Nature*, improve the current understanding of the physiological processes and relationship between exercise and feelings of hunger.

According to the study's co-corresponding author,

Dr Yong Xu of Baylor College of Medicine, the research will help decode how exercise works at a molecular level, allowing scientists to "capture" some of its benefits.

This could lead to the development of medication simulating exercise – aimed at people who cannot exercise enough – and by doing so



BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

If we can understand the mechanism, we are closer to helping people improve their health

Yong Xu

help slow down osteoporosis, heart disease and other conditions.

"If we can understand the mechanism by which exercise triggers these benefits, then we are closer to helping many people improve their health," Xu said.

More: http://lei.sr/s3G9S_H



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Founded in the Bronx, Everlast has sponsored boxing greats such as Muhammad Ali

“

Ultimately, we want to become the number one fitness business in the UK and if the options came available, we'd consider going overseas



PHOTO: DAN SUMMERSON/EVERLAST GYMS

DAN SUMMERSON

The MD of Everlast Gyms is steering the business through a process of unification, rebranding and 'elevation', rolling out a hybrid model that he believes will take it to UK number one status. He speaks to Kate Cracknell

“We know that we're going to be opening new sites. We know we're going to be rebranding and relaunching lots of clubs. How many people can say they're doing that day in, day out?” asks Dan Summerson, managing director of Everlast Gyms. “It's a challenge, but it's one that excites me more every day, and we're building a team that feels the same.”

At the heart of this challenge is what Everlast owner, Frasers Group, calls its 'elevation' strategy: a modernisation and premiumisation of the offering that's evident across the Group's estate, not just within the gym division.

Under Summerson's leadership, there's a clear vision of what that means in a gym context and it draws on his experience of working in both big box fitness – for the likes of Fitness First – and in the boutique sector, including at TRIB3 and BXF.

“We've set out to make our gyms feel like a hybrid, taking what we consider to be the outstanding elements from the boutique environment and from the big box environment and bringing them together,” Summerson explains.

Keeping it simple

“One of the main things that works really well for the big box market is how they operate the pricing structure. In line with this, our clubs ▶



*There's a mural of
Mohammad Ali as soon
as you come in and on the
gym floor, the first thing
you see is our boxing
class, so you know you're
in an Everlast Gym*

- typically charge £20–30 a month (US\$24–36, €23–34), all-inclusive,” says Summerson.

“We want to keep it simple, rather than complicating the offering with added extras.

“For that price, members get a valuable product they can see and feel and touch; elevation isn't just about decorating and making the club look nicer. There's a really great fitness product, a really great bar and a really great secondary spend product, with smoothie bars, retail and supplements.

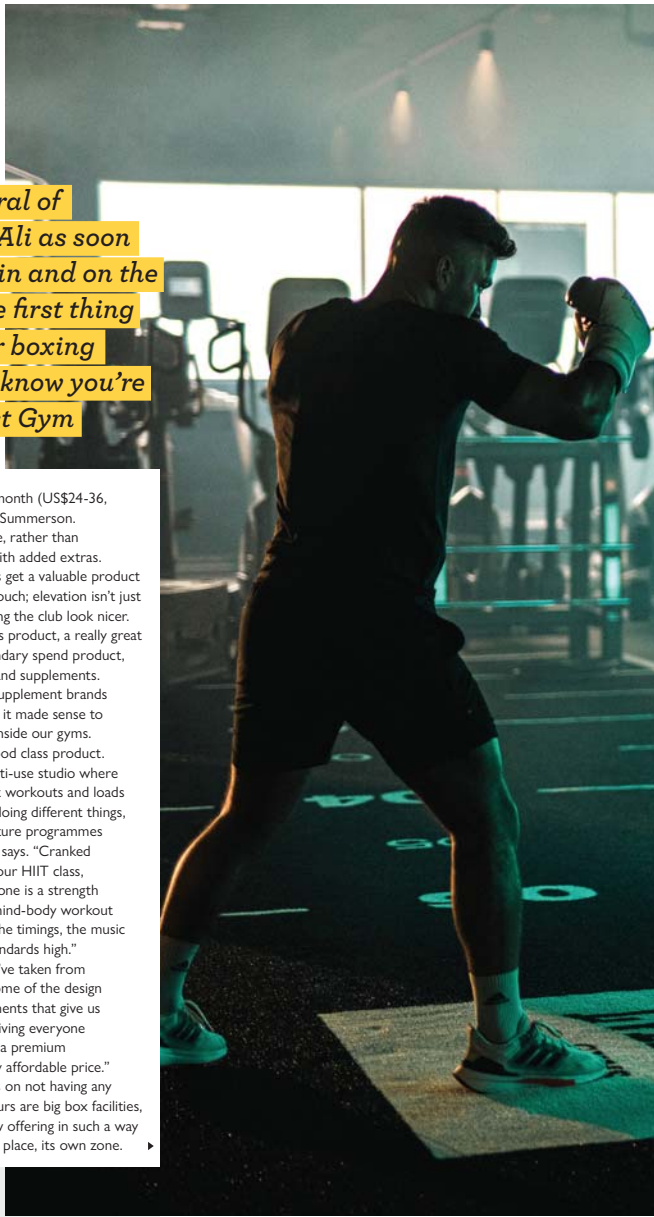
The Everlast clothing and supplement brands have also been elevated, so it made sense to bring everything together inside our gyms.

“We also have a really good class product.

Rather than the typical multi-use studio where you have 40 or 50 different workouts and loads of different instructors all doing different things, we've gone for fewer signature programmes with their own brands,” he says. “Cranked is indoor cycling, Hustle is our HIIT class, Haymaker is boxing, Backbone is a strength class, and then we have a mind-body workout called Breathe. We set all the timings, the music and the lighting to keep standards high.”

He continues: “What we've taken from the boutique market are some of the design features and class environments that give us that premium feel. We're giving everyone the opportunity to train in a premium environment, but at a really affordable price.”

“As part of this, we focus on not having any wasted space,” he says. “Ours are big box facilities, but we've designed the new offering in such a way that everything has its own place, its own zone. ►





Everlast, the story so far

Everlast is an American brand of sports equipment, specialising in boxing, MMA and fitness, with worldwide distribution of equipment, clothing, sports nutrition products and footwear.

The brand was founded in the Bronx, New York City, in 1910 by 17-year-old Jacob Golomb, the son of a tailor and a keen swimmer.

Golomb started out as a manufacturer of swimwear, guaranteeing his suits would last longer than a year. He named them Everlast.

The company began manufacturing boxing products in 1917 after a 22-year-old Jack Dempsey asked them to supply him with headgear that would "last for more than 15 rounds".

Everlast went on to build its boxing credentials, sponsoring Joe Frazier, Marvin Hagler, Larry Holmes, Sugar Ray Leonard and Muhammad Ali.

The company now also produces a number of MMA and boxing podcasts.

Everlast is currently based in Manhattan and was acquired by Frasers Group in 2007.



Everlast first moved into boxing wear in 1917

PHOTO: EVERLAST / JONAS KOPPELBERG

The boxing ring is front and centre in the Everlast gym design



Our clubs typically charge £20–30 a month, all-inclusive – we want to keep it simple, rather than complicating the offering with added extras

- “We still have cardio, free weight, pin-loaded and functional areas on the gym floor, as in most big box gyms, but even first-time gym-goers can easily identify those zones thanks to our lighting, flooring and kit layout. Then we have our class zones, which we’ve designed to be usable throughout the day, even when classes aren’t on.”

There’s a nod to the Everlast brand heritage, too: “There’s a mural of Mohammed Ali as soon as you come in and hit the stairs, and we have boxing gloves up the stairs too,” he says.

“Then, when you get to the gym floor, the first thing you see isn’t a load of cardio. It’s our boxing class, with a really cool zone that we’ve created in steel and bronze – a zone that’s usable outside of class times as a boxing bag and resistance training zone.

“We’re going to put certain key features in every site we do, and this boxing zone will be

one of them. When you see these features, you’ll know you’re in an Everlast Gym.”

A comprehensive rebrand

All of which brings us to the brand name. When Summerson joined Frasers Group in 2021, he was presented with a diverse portfolio of club brands – the result of growing predominantly by acquisition. (See ‘Uniting the Estate’)

“There were Everlast Fitness Clubs, former DW clubs and Sports Direct Fitness clubs,” he says. “My task was to pull them together as one brand.”

That brand was Everlast Gyms – a “more modern” take on Everlast Fitness Clubs, with Ashley having acquired the rights to the Everlast name for a reported US\$168m in 2007 (£139m, €160m).

The Everlast brand has a long pedigree, having been founded in the Bronx, New



Uniting the estate

Everlast has an expanding portfolio and is growing by acquisition and new build development

In 2020, when DW Sports went into administration, Mike Ashley’s Frasers Group acquired DW’s fitness assets – at that point 73 clubs – for £37m. Some were permanently closed; the remainder were immediately rebranded Everlast Fitness Clubs.

These clubs were then brought into a gym division, operating under the umbrella of Sports Direct, that also included a number of former LA fitness clubs – acquired in 2014 and by

now operating as Sports Direct Fitness – and a few newer gyms that had opened organically under the Everlast Fitness Clubs banner.

By the time Summerson joined the Group in 2021, the estate totalled 69 clubs: 40 former DW gyms, 18 Sports Direct Fitness/LA fitness locations, nine organic Everlast Fitness Clubs, and two yet-to-open new sites in Denton and Preston.

Summerson’s task, as he explains, was to “make them all feel like one

brand”, spurring a decision to move quickly towards one unified brand name: Everlast Gyms.

By the end of May 2022, when this interview was conducted, the portfolio consisted of 57 Everlast Gyms – including all 40 former DW clubs – plus 12 still branded Sports Direct Fitness, for now at least.

Across all 69 sites, the umbrella brand is now Everlast Gyms, led by Summerson. **More: www.everlastgyms.com**



PHOTO: EVERLAST / MOVIE.CO PHOTOGRAPHY

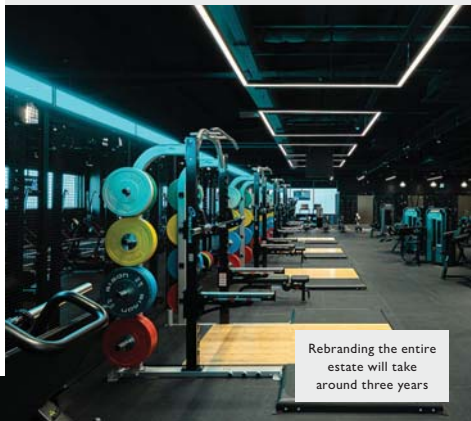


The Everlast clubs are designed as 'big box meets boutique'

York City in 1910, initially as a swimsuit brand and then eventually as a boxing brand (see 'Everlast, the story so far').

"There was a lot of discussion around how quickly we should bring all our locations under one brand," says Summerson, "but for the majority of our estate, we decided to do it straight away." It meant clubs were branded Everlast Gyms before they'd been elevated but, as he explains, "we felt it was right to get some traction and consistency across the estate – our clubs, our website and our social media".

At the time of conducting this interview, one club was already operating the new Everlast Gyms model: a new property in Denton, Manchester. Opened in late December 2021 to test the concept, equally importantly it gave the teams – especially those coming from the older-style clubs – a chance to understand the new approach, says Summerson. "It's been a massive learning curve for them, but now we've been able to show them the new look and feel and new ways of operating, I think they're super, super excited about it." ▶



Rebranding the entire estate will take around three years



We're in a comfortable position, with most of our members back and are poised for growth.

Our forecasts for FY22/23 are strong

► Two more fully-fledged Everlast Gyms will have opened their doors by the time this interview is published: the inaugural club, unveiled with its new look and feel at head office in Shirebrook on 18 June and a second new site in Preston, which opened on 24 June.

"It's early doors," confirms Summerson.

"The DW purchase was made in lockdown in 2020, and since then we've been pulling together our strategy and look for the future."

More rebrands will follow, with an emphasis on upgrading the 40 clubs that have been retained and are still operating from the DW estate.

"We'll update the remaining Sports Direct Fitness clubs eventually too and at some point we'll also tackle the clubs originally opened as Everlast Fitness Clubs, even though those are already quite new," says Summerson.

"We're keen to have everything under one umbrella and all looking the same. But

it won't happen overnight: it's a massive roll-out and I'd say it's a three-year project to get everything up to our new Everlast Gym standards," says Summerson.

"Even that's a tough ask," he continues, "We're under no illusions – if we can do it in three years, that will be great. If it takes a bit longer, then that's the way it will have to be."

Strong forecasts

In the meantime, business performance has been roaring back, says Summerson: "In FY22 – the full year to 30 April 2022 – we built up our membership base really well. We're now in a comfortable position, with most of our members having come back and are poised to keep growing. Our forecasts for FY23 are strong."

That includes growth beyond the current estate, with a focus that's very much on new brick and mortar locations. "We're fully aware we're



PHOTO: EVERLAST GYMS

Signature programmes have their own brand feel – such as 'Backbone' strength classes

undertaking a big project with the elevation of our current sites, but if growth opportunities come up we feel are worth taking on, then we'll definitely take them," says Summerson.

"We have the team behind us now to do it organically, too. I'm not saying we'd never make another acquisition – that's for the people above me in the business to decide in any case – but I think we can and will grow organically as well."

He adds: "What I'm seeing is big box gyms recovering – better than the boutiques, in fact – with people wanting to come in for the community and the environment. We'll offer more interactive digital experiences in-club, but not online home workouts. Honestly, I think Apple has cleaned up there. In any case, we want people to come and use our spaces."

Although Everlast is part of Frasers Group, there is, says Summerson, "no talk at the minute" about Everlast Gyms opening

up inside department stores. "It's more about how we can sit alongside to some of the Group's other operations," he says, "Taking advantage of the foothold going into Sports Direct stores, for example."

Summerson concludes: "Ultimately, we want to become number one fitness business in the UK. I also believe that if the options came available, we'd consider going overseas."

UK #1 is a lofty ambition, I venture. How would he define that? "I wouldn't say it's defined just by number of clubs, because you could have a load of clubs that aren't up to a great standard," he says. "For me it's about product, design and standards."

"Of course, you have to be a certain size to be well known. You need a certain number of clubs. But I want us to get those three key elements consistently right. I want our members to walk away from each workout thinking we have an outstanding offer." ●

Powerful content

Technogym's latest connected equipment offers members personalised cardio training experiences with fresh content provided by expert instructors

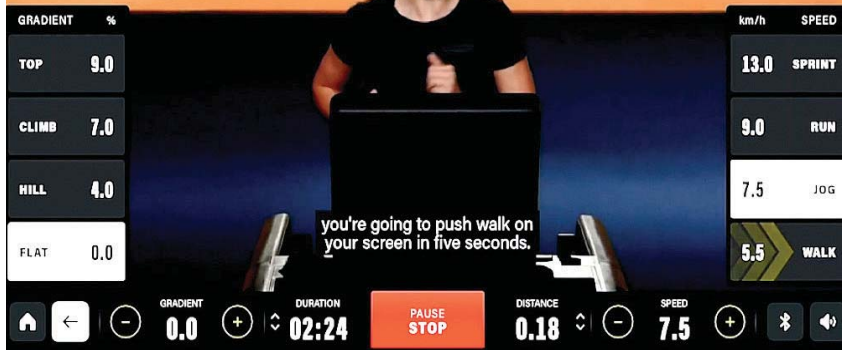


With Technogym Sessions, members can get expert coaching from their consoles

PHOTO: TECHNOGYM

16:40
REMAINING

Members have on-the-fly, fast-track, on-screen controls



Technogym cardio equipment has an intuitive interface that guides and motivates exercisers with personalised training experiences

Embracing the evolution of digital software solutions has become increasingly important – especially when it comes to delivering personalised training experiences that provide efficient and engaging content to your members.

The Technogym Live training content platform features on-demand workouts for fitness, sport and health and is available on all product lines, including the latest innovation in cardio equipment – the eight-piece Excite Live range.

Technogym cardio equipment has a simple and intuitive interface called Technogym Live, key to the platform are Sessions that guides and motivates exercisers to reach their goals, with a personalised training experience offering relevant content to elevate the training experience.

Now, more than ever, people are looking for personalisation and to have the most engaging and motivating trainers supporting them in achieving their goals.

Endless training possibilities

There are over 700 highly engaging, trainer led readily available sessions, so members can find the perfect workout that best meets their needs.

There are six progressive sessions in

Content is created
by 40+ 'top
talent' trainers



Fast facts

Technogym Sessions

- 700+ sessions
- In 7 languages
- With 40+ talented trainers
- Over 700 hours of content available

Technogym Content Factory – with two studios in Italy and a third in Los Angeles – has produced over 700 hours of original content

► each goal-based training series, such as 'your first 5k', drills and technique, fitter and faster and endurance and efficiency.

Members can boost their workout with pure energy from the best trainers, as sessions are led by 40+ 'top talent' trainers who are leading PTs and social media influencers. Let them show your members proper form and motivate them to achieve maximum results.

Alongside the six progressive sessions, members can also train in a time-based goal session and once in the session, they can choose between beginner, intermediate and advanced intensities. Along the top of the profile, they'll see their overall class profile and Technogym Sessions profile. They can then control the intensity on the left- and right-hand sides of their screen with on-the-fly fast-track controls to ensure they stay true to their form.

Along with delivering Sessions, the Technogym Content Factory – with two studios in Italy and a third in Los Angeles – has also directed and produced all the sessions, with over 700 hours of original content to motivate and encourage members through their workouts.

Technogym Coach

Built into every piece of equipment and the entire ecosystem, Technogym Coach is AI that provides motivation and guidance to help members train better and make the most of their workout. And with a variety of new content on the consoles, accomplishing goals has never been such fun.

Members can start a journey of engagement and motivation and with Technogym Sessions, they'll have a personalised trainer at their fingertips. ●

24:52

RE: MINUTES

Technogym Sessions
content is available
in seven languages

Now let's hit the sprint button
and start a 70% progression

70% SPRINT

12.0

km/h



INCLINE
0.0



TIME
01:26

PAUSE
STOP

DISTANCE
0.52



SPEED
11.5



CASE STUDY ONE

Crow Wood Leisure

"We took on Technogym Sessions purely to offer something new to our members, as we knew it would tick the box for a significant majority of them."

"Initially, we put Sessions on two treadmills, however, after seeing the success of this, we added it to our full offering of eight treadmills."

"Offering Sessions on gym floor treadmills is a great opportunity for people to get involved, as we definitely see a real interest in it at peak club times from members who wouldn't necessarily go into a class environment, but are looking for support and to get instruction."

"We've been with Technogym since day one and have followed all the new equipment adoptions across the site."

**We've added
Technogym
Sessions to all
our treadmills**



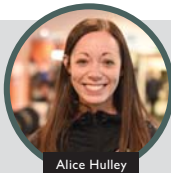
Oliver Brown

"We get the best support we feel there is, while also getting longevity of equipment on-site, as the equipment stands up to the test, handling a thousand visits a day – something we're working to increase."

"We know we can rely on the Technogym equipment to stand up to this usage."

CASE STUDY TWO

**We get great
feedback about
Technogym
Sessions**



Alice Hulley

Waterside Hotel and Leisure Club

"We adopted the Technogym Sessions because we wanted to offer something extra for our members and to stay ahead, because of the way the market was moving."

"Members have given us great feedback about the addition of Technogym Sessions, because they love that they're trainer-led workouts."

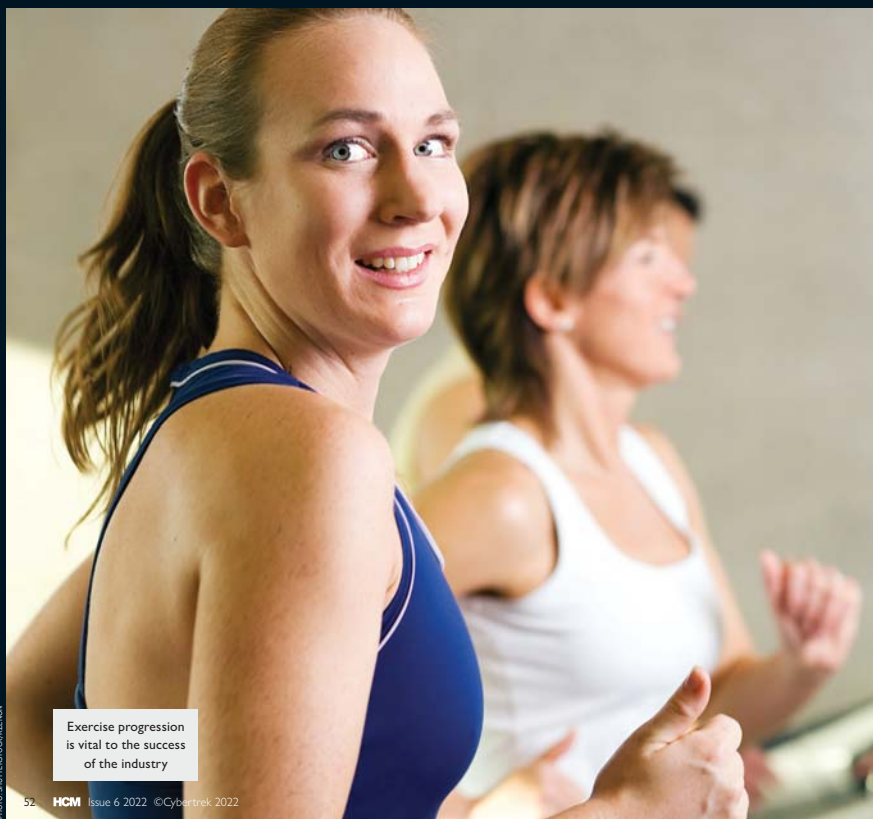
"For many members, to come to the club and log onto a cardio machine then to see an instructor and to have an experience of working out with them – but on their own piece of kit and in their own time – they think is brilliant."

"The Technogym team is also excellent and has really helped support us as a club. We've built a fantastic partnership with them and they're far more than just a gym equipment supplier. It's been wonderful to work with them for the past five years."

Ask the experts

Exercise progression

Abi Harris talks to industry experts about ways operators can ensure members feel a continual sense of achievement and progression that keeps them coming back for more



Exercise progression
is vital to the success
of the industry

Paul Bedford

Retention Guru

Motivation and willpower alone aren't enough. Members need a stimulus to reinvigorate themselves and – like a compass correction – set them on course again.

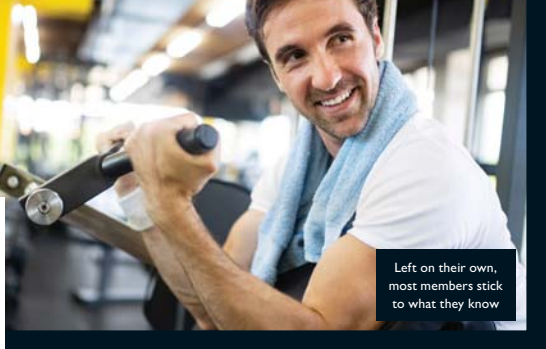
Without an intervention, members will go with what they know, even if it's boring, as they perceive a greater risk of not having a good workout if they try something new.

You need to make gym visits an experience; give members something to work towards. For example, creating a four-week exercise programme that builds up to something a little out of their comfort zone, or challenging them with a personal best to strive for in their fifth week. The idea is for them to challenge themselves to learn new exercises or new methods of training, rather than to compete against other people.

When people get bored or stuck, they give up. Look at your data and some of you will see people starting to drop out after six months, with an acceleration in attrition after this point, because they're not achieving results from their programme, are seeing less positives than when they started, or because they're bored. They're putting in the time and effort, but not getting results.

In video games, quite often you have to collect badges, treasure and weapons that you'll need at the next level. In our industry the equivalent is new exercises, new equipment, heart rate monitors etc – tools that help members get closer to where they want to be.

So aim to challenge them at around four months, before boredom sets in.



Left on their own, most members stick to what they know



Motivation and willpower alone aren't enough. Members need a stimulus to reinvigorate them

They should be confident in what they're doing by then and ready to expand their repertoire. Adopt a stepped approach, rather than a radical shift, so if they're doing chest presses on a machine, for example, consider teaching them how to do it using free weights.

It's a bit like going to your favourite restaurant and always ordering the same thing – if someone explains how good the special is, you're more likely to give it a go.

Following that first intervention at four months, I'd advise a nudge to try something different every three months – just when they're back to plodding along and need a new challenge.

Most programmes consist of three sets of 12 repetitions. Why? It's the equivalent of the quick start on a CV machine. When I worked at the YMCA we had 20 different approaches to resistance training alone, so mix it up more.

Suppliers offer great training on their new kit, so gym staff



PHOTO: DEANAL BEDFORD

can fully explain the benefits of the programmes on the console and help members get more out of their workouts. Make sure you take advantage of this, and make sure your team pass these

Bedford in brief

- Remember that without an intervention, members will go with what they know
- Adopt a stepped approach to programme change, rather than a radical shift
- Use the training offered by suppliers and pass their insights about the kit on to your members
- Remember that members need a stimulus to reinvigorate themselves
- Make gym visits an experience
- Encourage members to challenge themselves

Clayton Herbert

Technogym

It's vital to set the right foundations at the beginning of the customer journey by profiling and assessing users to understand their goals, dislikes, preferences, experience and – importantly – their readiness to exercise.

As an industry, we have the technology to run less intrusive assessments with high accuracy using body analysis devices, providing the user with a greater understanding of their body composition and a reference to improve against, which has become a standard for many operator customer journeys.

A framework such as FITT (frequency, intensity, time and type (of exercise)) can then be applied to support the exercise prescription phase.

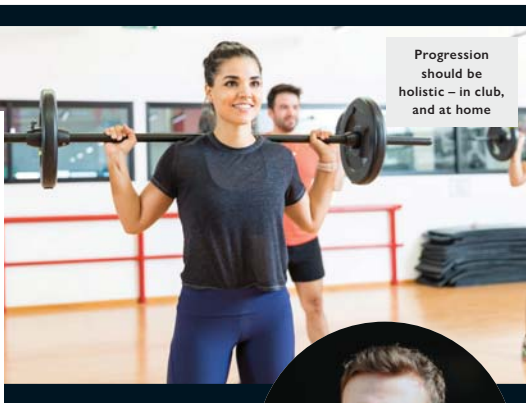
Equally important is looking at progression holistically. The club is integral to offering an experience users can't get at home – with expert guidance and human interaction – but prescribing exercise beyond the four walls is also vital to helping users progress wherever they are exercising.

Seasonality definitely impacts progression; as an industry, we

naturally see a drop off after the peak periods of January-March and September-October, but there's never been a better opportunity for operators to be creative, to stay in touch and engage members during non-peak periods, remaining relevant with a hybrid approach by providing remote coaching, engaging workout content and other paid-for or premium services outside the club.

We support operators in delivering hybrid journeys and continuous progression through the power of our ecosystem, in particular the Mywellness CRM, Technogym app and Technogym Live. These enable users to exercise wherever they are, and progress them through automation and AI; keeping them engaged and

Progression should be holistic – in club, and at home



We use AI to progress people automatically

motivated, while access to user insights also keeps operators at the core.

Additionally, our circuit-based solution, Biocircuit, automatically guides members through their workout, supports exercise compliance and enables progression.

With one log-in, the equipment automatically adapts each product to the users' range of motion, seat position, correct weight and more.

Biocircuit offers five engaging training programmes developed to optimise results for every type of user. Moving from station to station, users perform the prescribed workload for 45 seconds, while engaging with technology that balances all phases of movement – both concentric and eccentric.

Herbert in brief

- Set the right foundations at the beginning of the customer's wellness journey
- Profile and assess new members to understand their goals, dislikes, preferences, experience and their readiness to exercise
- Provide members with an understanding of their body composition to give them a reference to improve against
- Remember the club is integral to offering an experience that users can't get at home – with guidance, expertise and all-important human interaction
- Stay in touch and engage members during non-peak periods, remaining relevant with a hybrid approach
- Prescribing exercise beyond the four walls of the club is vital for users' progress

David Stalker

Myzone

Exercise progression is different for all of us, so we can't target everyone with one message or buzzword; we must be mindful of what it might mean to them personally.

For example, it could mean spending more time on their feet to overcome a sedentary lifestyle, or setting a specific target, such as distance goals or progression in movement complexity. If there's no evolution in their fitness journey, members will go elsewhere for excitement, engagement and ongoing benefits.

The tailored experience that shows a member you care and have the ability, equipment and partners to look after them, has to happen at the point of onboarding. Be with

PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK/NEVENSOK WASSILIS

them through the honeymoon period and earn their loyalty.

Set touch points to ensure members continually feel they're being challenged and overcoming obstacles. These need to be achievable goals that really make the difference when it comes to behaviour change and this will bring results time after time.

For instance, Myzone uses the Myzone Effort Points (MEPs) system. Earning 1,300 MEPs in a month meets the recommended guidelines for physical activity from the World Health Organization and is an attainable goal that can be built on month after month if a member wishes to better their previous count.

Through the use of accurate wearable technology, in-club tools, additional programming and support, Myzone gives the operator the means to engage a community and keep members motivated.

Staff and PTs can host classes, with members even joining the display screen from home, offering live feedback of heart rate zones, enhancing their experience and rewarding effort, regardless of fitness level.

Operators can also monitor members' activity outside the gym, setting new challenges and rewarding effort month by month via the Myzone app.

When we understand how people like to train outside our clubs, we're in a much better place to tailor our offering to their needs when they're within our four walls.

In class, the education in heart-rate training through easy-to-understand on-screen zones allows individuals to know exactly how their body reacts to each exercise. Outside the club, they can see their effort displayed real-time in the app or on their wrist (using the MZ-Switch wearable) but, more importantly, they can compare their metrics workout-to-workout.

Tailored offers come from understanding how members like to train out of the club

PHOTO DAVID STALKER



If there's no evolution in their fitness journey, members will go elsewhere for excitement

Stalker in brief

- Be mindful of what progression means to members personally
- Tailor your experience to show members you care and have the ability, equipment and partners to look after them. This has to be clear at the point of onboarding
- Ensure members feel they're being challenged and overcoming obstacles.
- Focus on creating achievable goals for your members
- Monitor members' activity outside the gym, so you learn what they enjoy

Aaron McCulloch

Your Personal Training

One of the biggest reasons members don't see progression is if they're put on a 'cookie cutter' 8-12 week programme with no call to action, and they're not told what happens after that.

Three months on, boredom sets in, they may not have seen results, there's a lack of motivation and accountability, so they either keep doing the same exercises or simply stop.

Programmes should have variations created around baseline abilities,

fitness level and confidence, but that's often not what happens – and this is where PTs can help, by supporting, guiding and encouraging members, which builds trust and rapport, so when that person needs help, they know who to approach.

We encourage PTs to interact with members on a daily basis, whether they're clients or not. New members in particular need regular interaction and some hand-holding. Once they're comfortable and more competent they'll naturally reduce their contact.

There's no set rule on how often interaction should happen, but it's always best to over-deliver, and the first 14 days of membership is crucial.

When it comes to developing an effective fitness habit and reaching goals, oversight and encouragement from a qualified professional is essential. When exercising alone, it's easy for people to fall into boring routines and become less adherent, especially if they don't see results or they plateau. A PT will mix it up, bring new challenges and explain new techniques to motivate members beyond the plateau.

Accountability is a big part of progression. Left to their own devices, many members wind up



We encourage PTs to interact with members on a daily basis, whether they're clients or not

on CV machines, or listlessly move from one piece of equipment to another. A PT ensures they spend time performing the right exercises with the right equipment. PTs are also ideal for people who can only commit a limited amount of time per week, as they maximise that time to ensure results.

Our PTs follow the three Rs rule, Results = Retention = Referrals.

McCulloch in brief

- Remember accountability is a big part of progression
- Avoid cookie cutter fitness programmes that have no call to action
- Ensure that programmes have variations around baseline abilities, fitness level and confidence
- Encourage PTs to interact with members on a daily basis, whether they're clients or not
- When it comes to interaction, it's best to over-deliver
- The first 14 days of membership is crucial

Scott Trinder

Peloton Commercial (Precor)

Exercise progression is rooted in results – in moving forwards and not stagnating – but results are never linear when it comes to exercise, so progression can be quite a protracted process, which is what makes it such an elusive thing for gym members to understand.

Ultimately, progression is what retains members' interest and custom. If they come consistently enough to see results they'll be motivated, which drives attendance.

Progress is nothing if you don't know you're making it. Members must know where they've come from to know where they're going – if someone doesn't know what weight they lifted last week, or how fast they ran 3k, how can they know they've made progress? You can't challenge yourself to move forward unless you can see you've stagnated.

Our digital networked fitness solution – Preva – offers operators the tools to quantify members' progression in black and white. A mobile app enables exercisers to track every workout, whether in the gym on an exercise machine, in a hotel room or the park. It enables members to cross-capture their data so every workout counts towards their progress.

Alongside this, we partner with Advagym by Sony, so operators can programme 'pucks' on their kit to gather as much information as they like and they track every rep.

Preva and Advagym feed into each other, meaning members can see where they're at and track progress visit-by-visit. Advagym can also sit within an operators' consumer-facing member app and complement other functions, such as nutritional advice.

In a climate where yearly memberships are less common



PHOTO: SCOTT TRINDER



We advise operators to train staff champions to drive in-club tech and steer members away from the quick start button

and members can easily cancel, operators have to be hot on progression at all times – every visit is a potential pinch point.

We advise our operator partners to train up staff champions to drive the tech in-club, to ensure members are using it to its full potential for their progression. These champions can steer members away from the quick start button.

Progression needs to be part of the fabric of a club, from a members' very first visit, make sure that every joiner knows enough about the kit not to take the path of least resistance. No-one who takes that path is going to make real progress – you have to record it, assess it and progress from it.

Trinder in brief

- Results are never linear when it comes to exercise
- Make sure that every new joiner knows enough about the kit not to take the path of least resistance
- Progress is nothing if you don't know you're making it
- Operators are advised to train staff champions to ensure that members are using the in-club tech it to its full potential for their continued progression
- Progression needs to be part of the fabric of a club



Patrick Wolstenholme

Oldham Active

The Oldham
Leisure Centre

Case
Study



Progression must play a part in their long-term success for us to benefit from retention

For many people, even just entering our buildings for the first time is a massive achievement. Our team of fitness experts are on hand to acknowledge that simply turning up is personal progress.

It's important in those first weeks and months that our team is able to demonstrate we're a welcoming, kind, supportive and social environment.

However, consistency of care must go beyond those first few goals to achieve long-term success, and we ensure members are offered a full induction/welcome workout.

Our gyms are staffed at all times, with experts walking the gym floor offering advice and guidance, and we encourage staff to get to know members, even those that don't sign up for an induction.

To support progression, members are given regular, bespoke programme reviews, at least every four weeks or when they feel they need further motivation. These are determined by their availability, which could mean increasing intensity to get the best out of a workout time-wise, or duration if training for an endurance event, for example.

While we want gym visits to become habitual, we don't want members to get bored, so we

continuously challenge them using the FITT (Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type) principle.

Members need to feel their routine is having a positive impact, both mentally and physically and so as a customer's physicality adapts and their fitness improves, goals need to be constantly monitored and readdressed, to stop their mind becoming complacent and avoid them feeling their fitness journey is 'completed' or 'over', which could stop them turning up.

We've installed Tanita Body Composition equipment and trained staff in their use to help members understand the insights it gives on how their exercise routines benefit their health.

Whether a customer joins us to lose weight, is training for a particular health challenge or has a GP health referral to our Reach exercise scheme, progression must play a part in their long-term success for us to benefit from retention.

We're fortunate to have caring, educated staff and a wide range of facilities, including leisure centres, gyms, group exercise studios, swimming pools, racquet sports, indoor bowling, walking football, five-a-side, track and field, running/walking groups and social wellness groups. This personalised, adaptable approach, with so many activity options, all helps to keep progression on track. ●

Wolstenholme in brief

- Set the right foundations at the very beginning of the customer journey
- Profile and assess new members to understand their personal goals, dislikes, preferences, experience and readiness to exercise
- Provide members with an understanding of their body composition to give them a reference to improve against
- Remember the club is integral to offering an experience users can't get at home – with guidance, expertise and regular human interaction
- Stay in touch – engage members during non-peak periods.
- Remain relevant with a hybrid approach – prescribing exercise beyond the four walls is vital to help with progression



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6 steps to accelerate growth in fitness

**Ben Hackney-Williams,
head of content at Myzone,
shares tools to drive
positive change in 2022**



Ben Hackney-Williams

Communities – under the guidance of the fitness industry – need more support now than ever before. People's willingness to take advice on board and embrace new habits is at a new high and we need to be there for them to keep that motivation strong and fuel a 'movement of movement' with benefits that last for years.

Here are some ways you can demonstrate to members how to boost workouts through dynamic community tools and influencing long-term behaviour change that keeps more people moving with you for longer.

1 Discover digital drivers that work for you

The right digital tools are now essentials instead of just a way of keeping up with the competition or offering something for the sake of it.

You need to find ways of unlocking engaging and motivational experiences that are not only effective, but also inclusive. Rewarding effort is key to this, as it's tailored to the individual and is about more than just ability alone.

Myzone created MEPs (Myzone Effort Points) and placed them at the core of its offering, to not only reward effort, but also to equate that effort to the World Health Organization's guidelines for physical activity – a target of 1,300 MEPs per month.

Myzone gamifies fitness and drives motivation, resulting in members who stay 24 per cent longer with a gym than clubs that don't use Myzone.

It does this using in-club displays, the app screen and Remote workouts that can be applied as a member offering from anywhere.

2 Education is always an essential

In short, most of us don't know what we're capable of achieving until we do it – even those of us experienced in the industry or as a gym member. This applies to everyone, from the first-time gym user to professional athletes looking for that extra one per cent.

Learning about our bodies and getting comfortable with different degrees of effort is at the heart of what Myzone does. It's this understanding and education that keeps people moving for longer over time.

It's no longer simply a case of helping people to understand the benefits of exercise – that's been highlighted time and time again over the past few years. We're lucky in that the profile and importance of the fitness industry has been raised more than ever before; now it's time to give people the tools to recognise their individual physical activity needs and make positive behaviour changes that stick.

In regards to your own professional development, seek the education that lets you bring these benefits to members right from the start of their journey with you.

3 Partnerships are more powerful than you know

The biggest benefits no longer come from hiding your knowledge and keeping secrets of your experience to yourself. More people have aligned



Myzone gamifies fitness and drives motivation, resulting in members that stay 24 per cent longer

Understand what motivates members by asking why they exercise

themselves with businesses through brand loyalty or simply just time and tradition. This means that, instead of trying to create your own version of the thing that members are using, partnerships are key.

Myzone connects through analogue, ANT+ and Bluetooth with gym equipment, Apple Watch, Wear OS (previously Android Wear), Garmin and Samsung Galaxy. It also integrates with third-party apps such as MapMyRun, Strava, and MyFitnessPal. For in-gym benefits, Myzone plays friendly with other technologies, too, including Life Fitness, Les Mills, Wattbike, Precor, Concept 2 and more.

These partnerships should be in equipment and app integrations that benefit your members' lifestyle (not solely what you have in your gym), but can be so much more than that. Think of local businesses in your area that align with what your community wants to achieve.

Whether it's healthy restaurants, sports shops, subscription services, nutritional partners – or any

other opportunity – be sure you're not missing out on the chance to team up and add value for both sides.

4 Challenges inspire people to keep going

It's so important to reward effort, and the best way of doing that is to set challenges that engage, motivate and hold people accountable for their own physical activity levels.

We've seen individual and team challenges make a huge difference to building the buzz, keeping members moving and just bringing people together in a fun way that's enjoyable for all. Even when the competitive spirit really kicks in, it gets people talking who may not have done so previously – congratulating each other on achievements, sharing workout ideas, or innovating in programming to earn more MEPs towards their personal goals.



PHOTO: MYZONE

Individual challenges are a great starting point. For example, everyone meeting the World Health Organization's guidelines for physical activity in a month gets entered into a prize draw. That way, every member knows it doesn't matter if you're in the gym every day or once a week and so long as you meet the standard, you're in with a chance of winning.

Rewards for these challenges could be courtesy of other local businesses with whom you've collaborated or struck up a contra deal to your mutual benefit. Other options are in-house rewards, such as merch, classes and PT sessions, or a month off membership, for example.

5 Focus on helping others focus

Give your members something to focus their goals and performance on – don't rely on the mundane "I want to lose weight" or "I want to build muscle" induction stereotypes. Functional fitness and concentrating on a defined goal or achievement brings more benefits than abstract 'nice to have' reasons for stepping through the door of a gym.

Think about how someone might feel if they worked towards competing in, or simply completing, an event such as a Spartan race. Concentrate on distance goals such as following a mountain trail. Pick a particular lifting achievement, or get your community training for a Hyrox team challenge. The weight loss or strength gains will come as a result.

If you can ask the question "why", it's worth inspiring them to delve deeper into the reasoning. Don't stop at "I want to lose weight." Ask why? The reasons will vary vastly, but whether it's to be healthier for longer, be an inspiration to family or to improve mindset and mental health, it's valuable for both personal trainer or class participant if more of an understanding is there. None

It's so important to reward effort and the best way of doing that is to set challenges that engage, motivate and hold people accountable



of us wants to be treated as a 'box-tick' in the same form-filling exercise as the person before or after us.

Heart rate training offers an immediate education into our current physical condition, and guides anyone through short- and long-term goals. Keeping the focus on individual zones from workout to workout will not only indicate the exact level of effort a member can put in above and beyond where they thought they'd stop, but it will help them know when to push, when to recover, and how they're doing with progression over time.

6 Community should be your everything

The most important thing is being there for your community. In taking any of these steps, you'll be reaching out to more people in your facility, while also penetrating deeper into the local network.

Make people welcome, surprise and delight with what you offer at this time when going above and beyond can make you stand above the competition.

It's all about rewarding effort and finding the right partners that can add the most value at the heart of physical activity for your people. More: www.myzone.org



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Not only does the industry employ millions of people and generate billions in value-added to GDP, it also has an incredibly positive influence on health outcomes

DEEP IMPACT

New Deloitte report finds the health and fitness sector contributes up to US\$91.22bn* a year to global GDP, as Frances Marcellin reports

A new report by Deloitte, outlining the social and economic value of the global health and fitness industry, has been released by The Global Health & Fitness Alliance (GHFA), in collaboration with IHRSA.

The 418-page document – *Economic Health and Societal Wellbeing: Quantifying the Impact of the Global Health and Fitness Sector* – outlines the impact of the health and fitness industry on GDP and healthcare systems worldwide, as well as specific activity in 46 different countries and territories. It has identified a total impact of up to US\$91.22bn per annum*.

The premise of the report is that the industry is a major contributor to GDP and employment globally and that its presence – through gyms,



The report identifies the economic impact of absenteeism, as well as the cost of inactivity

health clubs and physical facilities – raises activity levels in the local community, which increases GDP and reduces healthcare costs.

Establishing impact

By reviewing existing data, academic studies and industry reports, the authors have devised a way to indicate the impact of the industry, firstly by explaining the economic impact of absenteeism and presenteeism and secondly by citing how much an inactive worker in each country or territory costs the economy.

This figure is key, because the report makes tangible recommendations, suggesting that investing a similar amount in helping inactive individuals adhere to exercise habits would generate benefits to GDP and the



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ROBINSOON

In 2021, the UK health and fitness industry had a direct 'value add' of US\$3bn, the report found

healthcare system, resulting in a payback to the economy after only one year.

By evaluating data and economic studies, the report shows how active citizens create value-added GDP, which cuts healthcare costs and absenteeism and presenteeism.

Reviewed studies come from organisations such as the World Bank, the OECD and the World Health Organization (WHO), while researchers also studied academic papers – such as RAND (2019), which found inactive individuals lose 2.6 – 3.71 days' working time due to presenteeism, and a *Lancet*-published report that found inactivity cost healthcare systems US\$53.8bn worldwide, as far back as 2013.

Positive outcomes

"This report begins to paint a picture of the industry's impact on population health and

the economic impact of the industry," reads the foreword from the GHFA and IHRSA. "Not only does the industry employ millions of people around the world and generate billions in value-added to GDP, but it also has an incredibly positive influence on health outcomes. In doing so, the industry collectively saves billions in healthcare costs, as well as giving productivity benefits."

The report's layout for each country or territory starts with its status in figures relating to GDP per capita, healthcare spending as percentage of GDP, disposable income per capita, ageing trends, percentage of insufficient activity and obesity level. Health trends and government initiatives follow, then economic impact.

For the UK, for example, the health and fitness industry in 2021 had a direct





The health and fitness industry collectively saves billions in healthcare costs globally, as well as giving productivity benefits

value-add of US\$3bn and supported an additional US\$1.5bn in value-added in its supply chain as well as 50,100 jobs.

Deloitte then reveals the economic benefit for each inactive worker who becomes active. With exercise comes improved health benefits, such as a reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes, dementia, depression, anxiety and a range of cancers, including breast, colon, bladder, kidney, lung and stomach. By linking the impact of activity to GDP and healthcare costs, Deloitte shows how exercise adoption can remove a burden from the healthcare system, as well as increasing GDP.

Country analysis sample

● Inactivity costs the UK healthcare system US\$4.3bn a year according to the report, of which US\$3.6bn is covered by the public health system. Each year the UK loses 43.8 million working days in absenteeism and presenteeism, costing the UK economy US\$16.5bn annually.

It concludes that every inactive worker costs the economy US\$1,713 per year and investing US\$1,700 in helping an inactive person to become active, results in payback in less than a year.

● In the US, inactivity costs the healthcare system US\$84.7bn, every inactive worker costs the economy US\$3,447 per year, and a US\$3,000 investment is suggested to transform inactive persons into regular exercisers.

● In Spain inactivity costs the healthcare system US\$7.2bn, it loses 19.8 million working days in absenteeism and presenteeism and every inactive worker cost the economy US\$1,978 (US\$2,000 investment per inactive person recommended).

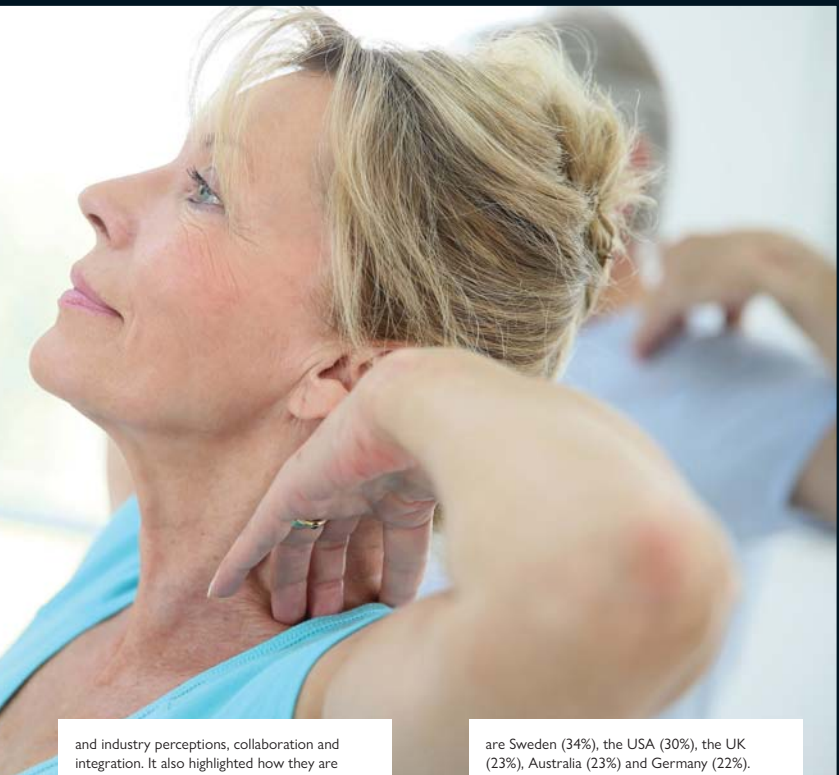
Taxes on physical activity vary widely by nation depending on government priorities

● In China, inactivity costs the healthcare system US\$15.3bn, while the nation loses 381.5 million working days in absenteeism and presenteeism, and every inactive worker costs the economy US\$466 (with a US\$400 investment per person recommended).

Value of investment

"The good news is that if implemented correctly, programmes to increase exercise can be habit-forming (Kaushal & Rhodes, 2015)," reads the report. "An initial investment in one year can have a pay-off that lasts for years if a habit is built."

Report authors, Alan McCharles, partner at Deloitte China, Adrian Xu, director at Deloitte China and Nicholas Young, senior associate at Deloitte China, also conducted interviews with industry stakeholders to shed light on some of the problems with current government



and industry perceptions, collaboration and integration. It also highlighted how they are working together in China, USA and Japan.

One of the issues raised is governments viewing health club membership as a recreational activity rather than a health investment. In the UK, gym membership carries 20 per cent VAT, while in Belgium use of sports facilities has a rate of only six per cent. Stakeholders suggested that purchases such as this should carry a more favourable tax rate.

Personal training programmes, physical activity policies and exercise as preventative care are seen as ways governments could work with the fitness industry to drive the transformation of inactive people.

Overview of market penetration

The most **established** fitness markets when evaluated by penetration rates among adults

are Sweden (34%), the USA (30%), the UK (23%), Australia (23%) and Germany (22%).

Fast-growing markets include Hong Kong (8%), Singapore (7%), Japan (6%) and China (6%).

Underdeveloped markets are Malaysia (1.5%), Thailand (0.7%), Vietnam (0.7%) and India (0.2%).

● The 46 countries and territories chosen for inclusion in the study account for around 90 per cent of global GDP. They are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China (PRC), Chinese Taipei, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong SAR – China, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the UK, US and Vietnam. To access the report, go to www.ihrsa.org

A man with a beard and extensive black and grey tattoos on his arms and neck is looking upwards with his right hand raised. He is wearing a light grey t-shirt. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor space with large windows and other people's hands raised in the air.

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LIVE VS

Do people get fitter working out in the gym or at home?
Researcher Bryce Hastings explains the evidence when it comes to how they measure up

13 per cent more enjoyment

The gym-based class was 13 per cent more enjoyable than the same class done at home

14 per cent more effort

Heart rates were 14 per cent higher during the gym-based class when compared to the same class done at home

DIGITAL

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a purple tank top and blue leggings, is captured in a dynamic pose, performing a high kick. She is looking upwards and to the right with a focused expression. Her right arm is extended forward, and her left leg is raised high, bent at the knee. The background is a blurred gym environment with large windows and structural lines.

**14 per cent
more
satisfaction**

The gym-based class
was 14 per cent more
satisfying than the same
class done at home

▶ **H**aving exploded in popularity during the pandemic, is it possible that on-demand workouts could render gyms redundant? Perhaps the answer can be found by examining what exactly we're doing when we work out at home versus at the gym.

First of all, we don't appear to be training as hard at home as we do in the gym.

Dr Jinger Gottschall and I conducted a pilot study comparing exertion and enjoyment levels between a live class in the gym and exactly the same workout followed digitally at home. The findings of our research were presented at the recent 2022 ACSM Annual Meeting and World Congresses in San Diego.

The study involved 54 regular Bodycombat participants from five different gyms across the US, who each wore a Bluetooth heart-rate chest transmitter to record their intensity levels. After each session, they completed a survey containing questions related to rate of perceived exertion, enjoyment, and satisfaction.

Despite doing exactly the same class, participants' average heart rate was 14 per cent higher during the gym class when compared to the on-demand session. As well as motivating them to work harder, participants rated the gym-based workout as 13 per cent more enjoyable and 14 per cent more satisfying than the digital workout.

The power of groupness

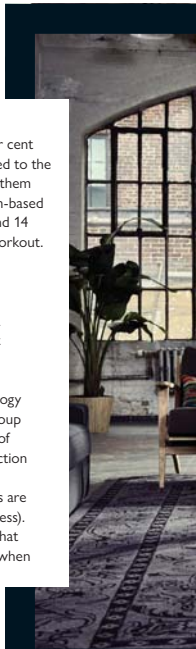
We believe the greater levels of positive perceptions and intensity experienced in a gym-based class can be attributed to what we call 'groupness'. This term was coined during previous research we conducted at Penn State University and the nearby Fitology club – which found that people in a live group exercise class experience increased levels of individual exertion, enjoyment, and satisfaction as a result of exercising in the presence of others, particularly when their movements are synchronised (www.hcmmag.com/Groupness).


When it comes to duration, it appears that most exercisers prefer shorter workouts when

People in a live group exercise class experience increased levels of exertion, enjoyment and satisfaction as a result of exercising in the presence of others



Gym-based classes elicited more positive responses





The majority of exercisers preferred a 60:40 split of gym to home workouts

they're at-home. Data from our Les Mills+ on-demand workout platform shows that around 70 per cent of at-home workouts are 45 minutes or less, with 50 per cent of attendees opting for workouts that are a maximum of 30 minutes.

Home workouts – the upside

There are, however, definite positives to working out at home. Despite the fact that digital home workouts are less intense and tend to be shorter in duration, study participants reported feeling less self-conscious and worried about their performance during the on-demand workout. This highlights its potential as a gateway into regular exercise for newcomers who may not yet feel confident enough to join a live gym class, or simply a way to top up live workouts.

Live classes in gyms remain the pinnacle experience, but the rise of digital fitness and flexible working reinforces the notion that hybrid fitness habits are becoming the norm. The Les Mills 2021 Global Fitness Report (www.HCMmag.com/LMGFR) found the majority of exercisers now favour a 60:40 split of gym to home workouts, so it will be interesting to see how fitness habits shift as the world learns to live with COVID.

The ultimate winners will be consumers, who now have more ways to work out and greater flexibility, making it easier to sustain their exercise habit. For clubs, the key challenge will be to leverage these digital tools to maintain member motivation and engagement in a way that complements the in-club experience.

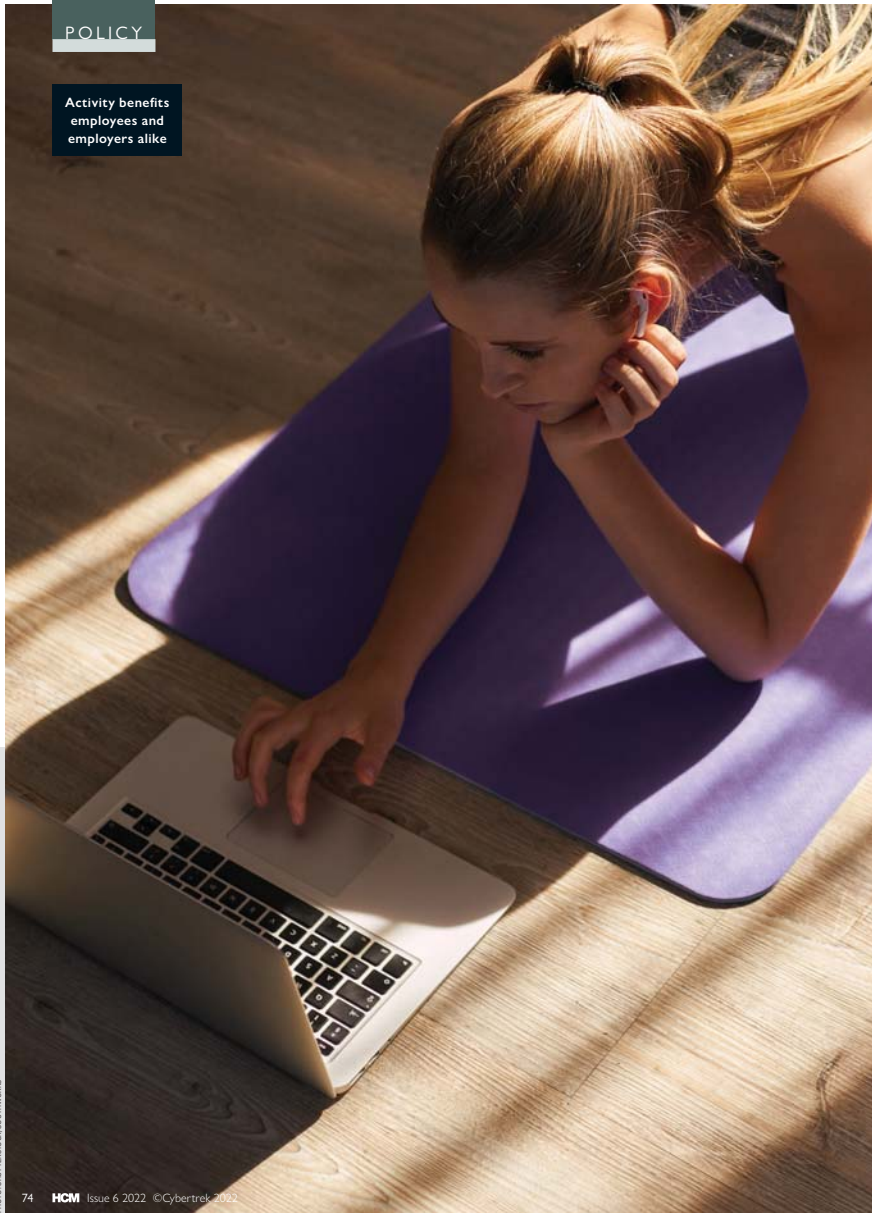
Maximising this opportunity requires a reimagining of the member journey and how we measure engagement. Instead of simply tracking club attendances, we need to pan out and look holistically at all the touchpoints a member has with their facility – including home workouts via the club's digital offering, and even use of the club app – to accurately assess member engagement and take actions to enhance this. Ultimately this combined approach can only help establish sustainable exercise habits, benefiting both those new to exercise and experienced users. ●

Bryce Hastings is head of research at Les Mills, while Dr Jinger Gottschall is an associate professor of kinesiology at Pennsylvania State University



PHOTO: LES MILLS

Activity benefits
employees and
employers alike





New research from Deloitte shows the industry could save US\$91.22bn in lost productivity and healthcare costs globally every year

ACTIVE WORKFORCE

UK Active's Alex Lucas explains the findings of a new report which shows how the fitness and leisure sector can help transform workforce activity levels in the new hybrid workplace



Alex Lucas

The total cost to the UK of physically inactive workers – measured through healthcare costs and productivity loss – is up to US\$20.8bn (£17bn) annually, according to a new research report *Economic Health and Societal Wellbeing: Quantifying the Impact of the Global Health and Fitness Sector* (www.hcmmag.com/GHFA), published this month. A fitter workforce could reverse this situation, saving the UK economy £17bn annually.

This groundbreaking study was carried out by Deloitte for the The Global Health and Fitness Alliance (GHFA), with support from IHRSA, and surveyed 90 per cent of the global health and fitness market across 46 countries, finding a total impact of US\$91.22bn.

The figure underlines not only the huge impact physical inactivity has on our economy, but also the major opportunities associated with having a more active workforce. ▶

Throughout our lifetimes, we spend an average of nine years at work, so we need it to be a place that allows mental and physical health to flourish

► New UK Active report

On the same topic, earlier this month, UK Active published *The Active Workforce*, its inaugural research report focusing on workplace physical activity opportunities and needs in small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the role the fitness and leisure sector – among others – plays in this.

The research indicates that of the SMEs surveyed, 44 per cent do not currently provide opportunities for their staff to be physically active during the day and 32.4 per cent don't feel their organisation has the support it needs to do this.

Of the SMEs that do put opportunities in place, there was a preference for low-cost, easy-to-implement support, such as the Cycle to Work Scheme (39.7 per cent) or team physical activity challenges and competitions (22.1 per cent).

More traditional forms of support from the sector, such as discounted gym memberships or providing exercise equipment, were some of the opportunities least taken-up by SMEs (at 7.4 per cent and 10.3 per cent respectively), due to the associated cost and the perception that the smaller size of their organisation made them unsuitable for the offer.

When asked where support should come from in improving workplace physical activity, 18.6 per cent of SMEs stated the physical activity,

fitness and leisure sector, then government health bodies and membership bodies (23.6 per cent and 20.1 per cent respectively).

Partnership with Sport England

The findings of *The Active Workforce* report are the culmination of a research consultation conducted by the UK Active Research Institute in partnership with Sport England.

The report makes eight recommendations to support opportunities for employees to be active during the working day, with these targeted at government, health sector organisations, business umbrella groups, the fitness and leisure sector, and SME employers.

Unlike most of the current research around workplace physical activity, this research specifically focused on SMEs because, while they account for 99.9 per cent of UK businesses – and roughly half of the UK's private sector turnover – they have less access to, or means to provide, opportunities for physical activity.

Many known solutions to the business community are for large corporate-based organisations, yet SMEs are often faced with smaller budgets, more financial challenges and may actually need more support in this area.

This is especially the case since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time the nation's physical and mental health has been hard hit.

Research already exists showing the positive link between physical activity and good mental health, and that being more active at work has multiple benefits. It can make us feel more satisfied about our work, improve overall perceptions of wellbeing at work, boost productivity and focus and act as a protective factor against the prolonged periods of sedentary time, or musculoskeletal problems we may face when working in certain roles.

Employers must allow teams enough time to look after their health

Throughout our lifetimes, we spend a lot of time at work – nine years on average. Therefore, we need work to be a place that allows both our mental and physical health to flourish and be maintained, instead of restricted.

Who's ultimately responsible?

But how much of a priority is workplace health for policymakers? In the UK, the government says 'improving wellbeing, healthy life expectancy and productivity', and 'reducing health inequalities by 2030' are major objectives within its 'levelling up' agenda. Former UK chancellor of the exchequer, Rishi Sunak, told business leaders at the CBI Annual Dinner in May 2022: "If we want to raise productivity in this country we need to do more to support those already in work. We need [employers] to invest more, train more, and innovate more. Our firm plan is to reduce and reform your taxes to encourage you to do all those things. That is the path to higher productivity, higher living standards, and a more prosperous and secure future."

With this in mind, *The Active Workforce* highlights that, while a variety of parties from a national to a local level have a role to play in supporting workplace physical activity, government has a specific role in terms of providing financial support to SMEs through incentivisation and tax relief.

This would encourage and facilitate businesses with smaller budgets to invest in workplace physical activity opportunities for employees.

The report recommends the government further supports opportunities for SME employees to be active during working hours by considering the expansion of existing schemes, such as Cycle to Work, to include options that support home working (eg, access to home physical activity equipment and gym membership) as well as office-based working.

Opportunities to support our productivity and wellbeing through engaging in regular physical activity have been drastically reduced by the pandemic, and the shift to hybrid working. Businesses clearly have a role to play by stepping up and supporting work environments – whether in a ▶

- physical location or remotely – that allow employees to take the time to look after their own health.

Our research findings indicate senior leaders can play a powerful role in shaping workplace culture and – through role modelling and giving permission and flexibility – empowering employees to take time for themselves to be active and keep well.

The opportunity for our sector

As our findings highlight, smaller businesses need help. Our sector is in a prime position to offer expertise and relevant services and products to SMEs, however, SMEs surveyed and interviewed felt current workplace physical activity solutions offered by our sector are not applicable for them.

The *Active Workforce* report highlights there is in fact plenty of work going on within our sector to provide workplace health products for smaller businesses, including collaborations with gyms and aggregators, and specially-funded workplace wellness initiatives working with wellbeing charities.

Nonetheless, there's a need to ensure the services the sector offers are fully accessible to SMEs and meet their needs. Specifically, two recommendations have been developed by UK Active for fitness operators and providers to consider:


1. Firstly, improve awareness of existing services among SMEs through targeted marketing to these



Workplace wellness checklist

Connect your health club with local businesses to extend your reach

- * Improve awareness of your existing services through targeted marketing to local SMEs
- * Make the economic case for investment in workplace wellness, using the Deloitte report
- * Be aware that senior leaders in SMEs can play a powerful role in shaping workplace culture
- * Influence them to empower employees to take time for themselves to be active and keep well
- * Work with partners, such as Active partnerships, to improve local reach into SMEs
- * Think holistically about the workplace offers you develop
- * Consider partnerships with broader wellbeing service providers
- * Offer hybrid models of delivery and toolkits to local businesses for home workouts
- * Connect your service with local businesses using your networks, such as your existing members
- * Create opportunities for business and operators to connect, co-design products and programmes and to interact



The breadth of the Active Workforce recommendations point to the important role different sectors play and the need for partnerships to put the recommendations in place

The Cycle to Work scheme is popular with SMEs

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/BRISQ0072

businesses, working in collaboration with partners to improve local reach and working with UK Active to showcase the services the sector can offer. 2. Secondly, think holistically about workplace offers – for example, consider partnerships with broader wellbeing service providers to integrate physical activity into holistic wellbeing packages for businesses, as well as offering hybrid models of delivery.

The breadth of *The Active Workforce* recommendations point to the important role that different sectors and organisations have in this agenda, and hence the need for partnerships to facilitate collaboration and support our sector to put the recommendations in place.

Be part of the levelling up agenda

As the trade body for the sector, UK Active has always looked to champion the role the sector plays in supporting the nation's health, while facilitating opportunities for it to grow. This report positions the sector and the role of workplace physical activity as a key part of achieving the government's

agenda of 'levelling up' population health and wellbeing. There's a clear opportunity to showcase the best of what our sector can offer, and further demonstrate the important role it can play by continuing to connect services with local businesses.

Partnerships between business and local leisure is one way to do this – and it's also one of the many ways UK Active can support its membership and help the sector to grow. The creation of opportunities that allow the fitness and leisure sector and the business community to co-design and interact could maximise the exposure of the sector's services, and SMEs' access to these services.

This research provides the first stepping-stone for collaboration and partnership between our sector and business in this area. However, the conversation has only just started and we'll continue to help shape and grow this area of work through a process of co-creation and with direct input from SMEs and our sector. Together, we can begin to drive positive change for the UK's workforce. ●
Get involved: email research@ukactive.org.uk
Get the report: www.hcmmag.com/ActiveWorkforce

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The gym has been designed to meet the specific needs of rugby players

Rugby elite

A new performance gym from Matrix is taking Cardiff Rugby to the next level

Following on from a long-term partnership agreement announced with Matrix Fitness in October last year, Cardiff Rugby has opened its doors to a fully-equipped, high-performance facility – the Matrix Performance Gym – at its clubs training centre in Pentwyn.

The Matrix Performance Gym combines traditional strength training with a vast array of cardiovascular equipment, including a innovative spin studio, to offer training variety and versatility. It has also had a full rebrand to reflect the club's rich heritage, achievements and long-term ambitions.

Director of rugby, Dai Young said: "We were thrilled to agree a new partnership with Matrix earlier this season and knew they would do a fantastic job – from previous experience of working together. "The trustworthiness of the brand, the phenomenally durable equipment

and the quality of the customer service they provide made this facility transition an exciting venture.

"They have once again exceeded our expectations with the design, reconfiguration and installation of this brilliant facility. It elevates us to the next level of elite facilities and will be an important factor in our continuing development and journey as a club."

The fitness journey

As part of the installation process, Matrix Fitness brought the Cardiff Rugby vision to life by seeing the project as an entire, wraparound fitness journey. It wasn't just about the installation of equipment, but also about how the players felt working out in the space.

Matrix Fitness provided expert advice on branding, the ergonomics of the layout of the gym and the lighting, in order to create the best atmosphere and enhance the feel of the elite sport environment.



PHOTO: TRYSTAN BEVAN

"I genuinely believe we have the very best rugby club facilities in the UK, if not in Europe"

Trystan Bevan, Cardiff Rugby

"We're enormously grateful to Matrix for its continued support and look forward to working together for many years to come," said head of physical performance, Trystan Bevan. "They maximised every inch of space and delivered a vision I didn't have the imagination to see. The result is an incredible training space that inspires and motivates everyone who steps foot through the door.

"I genuinely believe we have the very best rugby club facilities in the UK, if not in Europe," he said. "The equipment is first-class, with everything to suit an elite rugby team and extras such as the Matrix climbers and spin studio to increase high-intensity, low-impact sessions."

The gym is the first phase of the club's new High Performance and Health Centre at Pentwyn and its latest show of support for Cardiff Rugby. ●

● www.uk.matrixfitness.com



Cardiff Rugby is developing a High Performance and Health Centre



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Coach Gyms worked with Safe Space Lockers on its luxe changing rooms

PHOTO: COACH GYMS/SAFE SPACE LOCKERS

Redefining affordable luxury

Coach Gyms chose Safe Space Lockers to create a premium changing room experience for its latest club in Harrogate, UK

Harrogate's most affordable gym looks and feels anything but, when you see inside the new £1.5m Coach Gym – with over 200 pieces of fitness equipment, four group exercise studios, classes programmed exclusively for Coach members and a re-fuel bar to harness the club's sense of community and wellbeing – the brand clearly delivers against its vision of an 'affordable boutique' offering.

Having worked with Safe Space, suppliers of lockers and changing room solutions to the fitness and leisure industry, on the first Coach site in Leeds, it was an easy decision for CEO and Founder Stuart Perrin to work with the team on the new Harrogate facility: "Safe Space was fantastic to work with on the Leeds club and the brief for Harrogate was similar; we wanted to achieve luxury changing rooms with a high-end finish and great attention to detail," he says.



PHOTO: COACH GYMS

We want to provide that extra bit of luxury"

Stuart Perrin, Coach Gyms

Only this time the changing rooms would also be used by members of Surge Padel, the UK's largest premium indoor padel tennis centre. Padel tennis is one of the fastest growing sports in the country and the new Harrogate development puts the Yorkshire town at the heart of this popular activity.

This unique brief meant combining both brands in the design concepts, so every element

– from colours and lighting to best use of space – was carefully considered. Customised features, including branded locker number plates, were also incorporated, in line with the bespoke experience that both facilities aim to create for their customers.

With a target audience of 25-55-year-old females, the large majority of its member base falls into this demographic. But Coach Gyms aren't 'women only', as Perrin explains: "We've created an environment that's non-intimidating, soft and relaxed in its approach, to ensure the best experience possible for women who work wout here.

"This is reflected in the design of our changing rooms," says Perrin. "Ultimately, our aim was to deliver an amazing boutique experience for gym-goers seeking that extra bit of luxury and Coach Gyms does just that." ●

● www.safespacelockers.co.uk

Small but mighty

Small group training is growing ever more popular, driven by supply-side innovation and demand, as HCM's Frances Marcellin discovers



Matthew Januszek

Matthew Januszek

Escape Fitness

Equipment innovation and evolution is a key reason why small group training remains popular, despite the fact that it's been a staple for many years.

As a functional training equipment provider, it's our job to develop the training tools instructors need to inspire, and deliver results. This means constantly questioning the ordinary in pursuit of the extraordinary and introducing results-driven training tools to keep members engaged and paying.

PHOTO: ESCAPE FITNESS

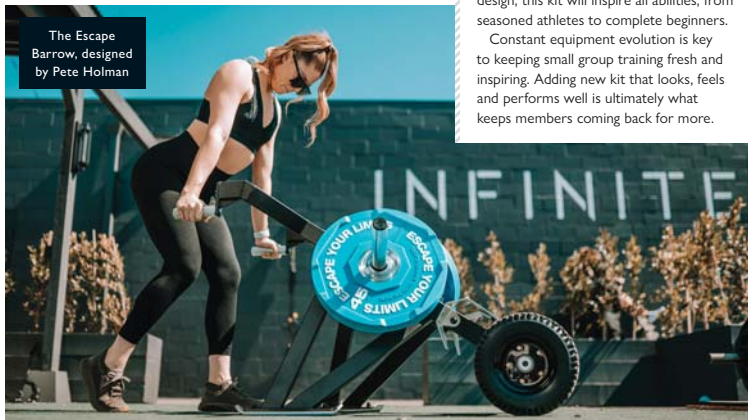
Over the years we've worked hard to ensure small group training can evolve through inspiring equipment innovation. Ten years ago, for example, our training frames focused on supporting the execution of bodyweight exercises. Today this remains core, but as the market and consumer needs have evolved, we've added new elements. For example, this year, we've introduced The Crux, a variable resistance infinity rope and The Stack, a fully-integrated cable column. Each provides instructors with a wide variety of exercises, adjustable to suit size, ability and muscle group.

In the last month, we've also worked in collaboration with Pete Holman – inventor of the TRX Rip Trainer and Nautilus Glute Drive – to bring a new product called The Escape Barrow to market. This is the world's first farmer carry/sled pull combo. This piece of kit has been designed to invigorate small group training spaces. With its easy-load, back-safe design, this kit will inspire all abilities, from seasoned athletes to complete beginners.

Constant equipment evolution is key to keeping small group training fresh and inspiring. Adding new kit that looks, feels and performs well is ultimately what keeps members coming back for more.

We've worked with Pete Holman – inventor of the TRX Rip Trainer – to bring The Escape Barrow to market

The Escape Barrow, designed by Pete Holman





The Shred Shed
from Beaver Fit

PHOTO: BEAVER FIT UK



Jon Monk

Jon Monk

Beaver Fit UK

Small group training has been gaining traction as an affordable and inclusive way for clients to take advantage of a trainer's expertise at a lower price point, while enjoying the personal coaching and compelling group dynamic.

Seeing the rise in demand for small group training, our design engineers created a small, compact version of our container gym to facilitate small- to medium-sized groups, while offering a storage solution with integrated external rigging.

This product – the Beaver Fit Shred Shed – has been a staple over the last two years, enabling operators to revitalise their outdoor fitness offering through innovation and development.

The Shred Shed has multiple bays for circuit-based training, allowing for the delivery of structured group workouts.

**Our design engineers
created a small,
compact version of
our container gym
– the Shred Shed**



Training more than one client ultimately brings extra income per hour for the gym or PT, offering maximum time efficiency and savings. Alongside this, through research and analysis, we've noticed that training small groups allows for the trainer to experiment with exercise formats and methodologies, giving them the opportunity to develop their training delivery.

Dedicated training programmes and an advanced training facility will ensure your small group training is a profitable venture. ►



The HIIT Pod featuring the Jordan Fusion HIIT Bench

PHOTO: JORDAN FITNESS



Scott Lamber

Scott Lamber

Jordan Fitness

To breathe new life into small group training classes, you need new experiences and specialist training programmes to wow your customers.

If offering a different experience while adding value is high on your agenda, you may be interested in the HIIT Pod, which offers the opportunity for both small group training and one-to-one PT.

HIIT Pods also enable harder-to-reach groups that are less confident on the gym floor the opportunity to enjoy a home-from-home gym experience, with a private stretch space and everything they need for a HIIT workout.

Combined with on-demand training programmes, these spaces can uplift your offering, while HIIT Benches are customisable to give your brand an uplift.

Elsewhere on the gym floor, rigs can offer a multitude of workouts in one dedicated space, creating a draw for new members.

From an operator's point of view rigs are a statement piece, and with the option to have them tailor-made to your specifications – in your brand colours and with attachments that suit your client base – you can stand out in promotional terms.

On a practical level, rigs offer PTs the opportunity to create compelling small group classes to increase retention, with dedicated classes to work every muscle, while developing power and strength.

The HIIT Pod offers the opportunity for small group training and one-to-one PT



HIIT benches are customisable to uplift a brand

Steve Barrett

Matrix Fitness

Small group training needs to be more than just a workout protocol to deliver an experience that pulls customers into your health club, it's vital the entire package feels relevant to them.

People are increasingly exposed to world class programming online, so the days of a hastily prepared circuit class with no long-term structure, led by a clock watching, rep-counting trainer need to be consigned to history.

In order to engage members, deliver results and drive revenue from small group training, consider how the workout protocol differs from other offerings in terms of the trainers' role and the intensity, duration and equipment – these all contribute to long-term relevance and viability.

Our MX4 Training System was designed to enable operators to deliver a long-term solution to a diverse range of clients, using equipment which offers equally powerful solutions during and outside small group training sessions.

Sessions should offer progress for regular participants, but also be suitable for those who only wish to join occasionally.

Writing 12 months' programming with built-in periodisation would be a mammoth task for club PTs, so we did it for them, taking a hybrid approach to the design of content. This means MX4 has over 150 predesigned session plans.

The MX4 protocol aims to enhance key aspects of fitness, such as cardio, power, strength and endurance. It would be wrong to classify MX4 purely as HIIT, because some of the predesigned sessions focus on developing skills, balance and coordination, while others encourage participants to challenge themselves in terms of intensity.

The research that went into creating the product provided us with a foundation to address the needs of ageing populations. Working with in-house scientists and age-specific focus groups we used scientifically-validated research to create 'MX4 Active' to get older, deconditioned adults moving in a way that's right for their abilities.



Steve Barrett

Working with age-specific focus groups we created 'MX4 Active' to get older, deconditioned adults moving



The MX4 Training System can accommodate people of all ages and abilities

Pilates classes are an effective way to drive secondary revenue



PHOTO: PIVOTS/JANBERTREK

The MPX Reformer is designed for health clubs that don't have a dedicated space for reformer Pilates



The MPX Reformer is designed to be space efficient



James Anderson

PHOTO: PHYSICAL

James Anderson

Physical

Reformer Pilates is an incredible strength and conditioning workout that commands a premium in exercisers' minds. As such, offering Pilates classes is a great opportunity for operators to drive secondary revenue.

Yet concerns about upfront equipment costs and a perceived need for dedicated studio space deter many clubs from offering small group reformer Pilates.

With the launch of the MPX Reformer from mind-body expert Merrithew, those perceptions can now be cast aside.

Distributed in the UK by Physical, the MPX Reformer has been designed to withstand the rigours of commercial use. It also offers all the versatility you'd

expect from a reformer, with hundreds of exercise options – ranging from beginner to advanced, and spanning functional strength and mobility, cardio conditioning, rehabilitation and yoga workouts.

It can be paired with Merrithew accessories, such as a jumpboard or rebounder, to intensify workouts with plyometric movements.

It's competitively priced, making it the ideal reformer for multi-purpose facilities with a diverse customer base. It's also space-efficient, with wheels that make it easy to move around and a stand for upright storage.

The MPX Reformer been designed for use in health clubs, hotels and studios that don't have a dedicated space for reformer Pilates, but that want to bring a premium Pilates offering to their members and guests. ●

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Product innovation



Frances Marcellin rounds up the latest launches in health and fitness

Biostrength, the new line for strength training, adapts to the user, says Nerio Alessandri

Technogym's Biostrength is a training solution that adapts to the user, promising 30 per cent superior results in the same amount of time.

Thanks to a patented technology that uses AI

and scientific research, Biostrength allows members to train with the right load, range of motion, correct posture and speed of execution, while indicating the number of sets, repetitions and optimal recovery times.

The patented Biodrive system, which uses aerospace technology, offers six types of resistance depending on goals. Users are guided through every aspect of their workout to achieve maximum results in a safe, effective way.

Biodrive recognises when the user is tired and a spotter function automatically reduces

● Biostrength uses AI to adapt workouts to the user



PHOTO: TECHNOGYM

the load to allow them to complete the set.

Four programmes are available. Hypertrophy: to develop muscle mass; Power to train like an athlete; Strong to increase strength and Tone get more muscle tone with less effort. It also has a

Free Training mode and integrates with Mywellness.

"Biostrength is a great opportunity for operators to offer programmes that guarantee results," says Technogym president and founder, Nerio Alessandri. fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD** Technogym



PHOTO: TECHNOGYM

Biostrength represents a great opportunity for operators to increase the value of their membership

Nerio Alessandri

Kabata uses haptics, such as vibration and rumbling to keep users engaged, says Kareem Aly

Kabata is developing AI-powered, haptic-enabled dumbbells and plans to launch them by Q1 2023.

The dumbbells capture a range of metrics, from

reps, sets and 'time under tension', to velocity, volume, power and calories.

"We run AI and analytics on those metrics to understand whether a

workout was fun or boring, easy or difficult, painful or painless," says Kareem Aly, Kabata's co-founder. "We know if you hit a personal best, struggled or left mid-workout. Our level of comprehension is unmatched."

The dumbbells have proprietary technology and progression algorithms, developed by an engineering team which, combined, have published over 20 papers on motion sensors – Kabata's core expertise.



PHOTO: KABATA

We're able to track workout metrics to coach and progress the user

Kareem Aly

Kabata uses haptics, such as vibrations, pulses and rumbling, which Aly says is "unprecedented in the category".

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD** Kabata



PHOTO: KABATA

● Motion sensors are embedded within the dumbbells

Magicleine can increase customer loyalty without high additional costs, says **Daniel Wischer**

Cloud software outfit Magicleine has integrated a new customer loyalty programme into its system.

While many operators focus on acquiring new members, Magicleine's chief product officer, Daniel Wischer, believes it's equally important to retain existing members in the long-term.

"A higher customer retention rate has a lasting effect on the financial security of a fitness business and that's where we come in," says Wischer.

"Magicleine enables studios to increase customer loyalty without incurring high additional costs."

The loyalty programme rewards members for



A higher customer retention rate has a lasting effect on the financial security of a fitness business

Daniel Wischer

a certain number of check-ins, training sessions or membership duration, and can be configured by the operator. The goals members need to reach to get rewards can be set in advance and are applied automatically.



● The programme rewards members using parameters such as class attendance

"Magicleine users with the 'advanced' and 'pro' packages only need to activate the new feature, while customers booked on another price package can

easily and independently switch," says Wischer. "They can then use the new feature without restrictions."

[fitness-kit.net](#) **KEYWORD**
Magicleine

Speede's workouts will reimagine strength training and health, says **Dan Mooney**

The Speede Challenger combines isotonic, isokinetic and max eccentric training. Set to launch in summer 2022, it has been designed by aerospace engineers for elite athletes.

Speede Fitness recently beat its seed round target of US\$2m reaching US\$2.5m and has attracted partners from the NFL, NBA and UFC.

In addition to standard and recovery modes, the Speede Challenger offers two workout settings



We're not just releasing a product, we're starting a movement

Dan Mooney

and up to 2,000lbs (900kg) of resistance.

Nemesis mode is isokinetic training that offers consistent

resistance throughout an entire movement. Eccentric mode is designed for eccentric training that produces greater increases in muscle mass.

"People are recognising that Speede's effective and efficient workouts are going to reimagine strength training and health," said co-founder, Dan Mooney. "We're not just releasing a product, we're starting a movement."

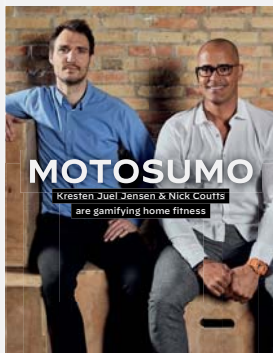
[fitness-kit.net](#) **KEYWORDS**
Speede Fitness



● The Speede Challenger delivers isotonic, isokinetic and eccentric workouts

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Kresten Juel Jensen & Nick Courtts
are gamifying home fitness

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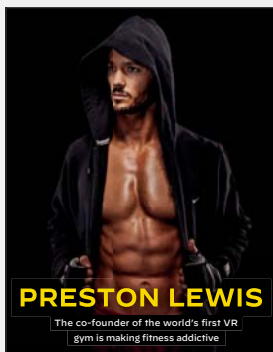
WILL AHMED

How WHOOP knows you've got
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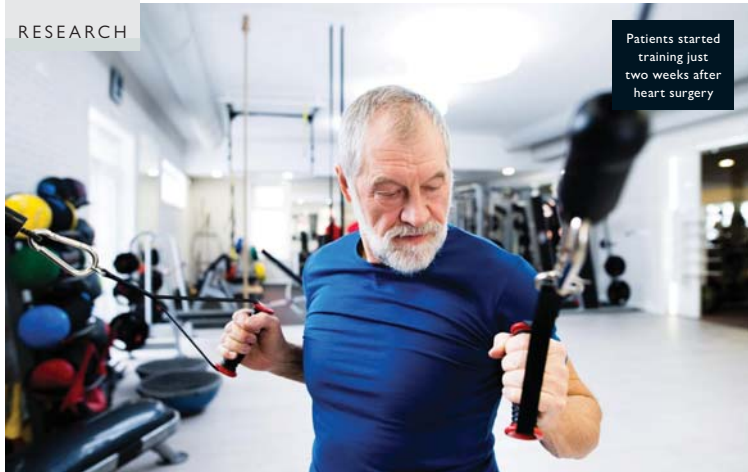


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/SALTERSTOCK/KAH, FRONT

Heart healing

New research from Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne has found that heart patients benefit from resistance training

Post-operative heart surgery patients could begin their road to fitness recovery much earlier than previously thought.

Game-changing research shows that upper-body resistance training can commence – and be beneficial – just two weeks after an operation.

For post-op heart surgery patients, exercise is typically limited to light-level activity for 12 weeks, as they recover from operations that have taken up to four hours to complete.

However, a study by Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia, showed that patients who undertake early resistance training recover quicker – within three months of surgery.

About the study

The results were based on a 12-week resistance training programme, which included patients using both limbs simultaneously.

Exercise physiologist Jacqueline Pengelly, the study's author, said: "Patients are often told to avoid or limit the use of their arms and undertake walking, meaning they're unable to perform or resume their daily or recreational activities, which can be a cause of frustration and feelings of loss of identity.

"However, patients in the resistance training programme reported feeling stronger and were motivated to keep trying to increase their workload.

Patients who undertake resistance training after surgery recover within three months

"Because they were supervised, and their safety and recovery monitored, they gained the knowledge and confidence needed to recommence the activities they enjoy safer and earlier than minimal activity rehab programmes.

Further research

Pengelly now wants to conduct a larger study with more surgery and resistance training intervention using a range of resistance equipment. She says: "This would mean that resistance training is more accessible to patients and give exercise physiologists and physiotherapists the confidence to replicate the training within their own cardiac rehabilitation programmes.

"Exercise is medicine – exercise physiologists need to carefully select outcome measures that are appropriate to the patient's ability and use this information to prescribe exercises and exercise intensities that are appropriate. It's time for change, so let's get moving." Read more about the study, *Exercise is medicine – how heart surgery patients are bouncing back post-op*: www.hcmmag.com/cardiac

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THERE'S ENERGY AND EXCITEMENT AGAIN...

As we enter Summer 2022, there is a sense of real optimism in the air. It's great to see people jetting off on foreign holidays, meeting up with friends and family and enjoying the season of sport once more.

Here at Pulse, we are also looking ahead to the summer months with high spirits and are especially excited to see many of our projects come to fruition, including the recently launched, Pulse Resale.

Pulse Resale was introduced as the fifth arm of our business this spring and enables our whole customer base to purchase or rent, pre-owned commercial level equipment at a fraction of the original retail price. This is an offering that has always been available to our commercial customers, but we hope that by offering it to the domestic market, it will allow more people to access fitness in an affordable way – an important consideration given the current climate.

The warmer, summer months will also motivate more people to head back outside to engage in group sports and outdoor workouts. We hope this will encourage our TRAKK members to engage with the outdoor fitness tracking capabilities on our connected fitness app. TRAKK was launched in the Autumn of 2021 and has seen great success with operators such as Premier Gym + Fitness, increasing the engagement and motivation of members who are now able to visually track their progress and results.

One thing is for sure, as we continue to stride strongly out of the darkness of the last two years, the industry must continue to work together to expand, grow and to ensure fitness remains accessible for all. We look forward to seeing what this new season has in store.

Best Wishes

Chris Johnson, MD



PULSE LAUNCHES RESALE DIVISION

SUPPORTING FITNESS INDUSTRY GROWTH



pulseresale

Pulse Resale is the newest arm of fitness equipment market leader, Pulse Fitness. The dedicated division enables customers to rent or purchase high quality, pre-owned Pulse kit at a fraction of the original retail price.

High Quality

Pulse Fitness has over 40 years' experience designing and manufacturing commercial fitness equipment and as such are proud suppliers to a variety of customers from the RAF to Buckingham Palace. As such, each piece of Pulse Resale kit undergoes an extensive service and testing process before heading out to its new home. Resale customers can trust they are receiving this same level of high quality, long lasting equipment.

Full Range

Pulse Fitness' full range of award-winning equipment is available through Pulse Resale. Free weights, functional accessories, selectorized strength lines and cardiovascular



equipment, all come with the option of additional console technology to enhance workouts too.

A Flexible Model

Pulse recognises that there isn't a 'one size fits all' model to fitness installations so have designed Pulse Resale to be as flexible as possible. Customers can choose to rent or purchase select pieces of kit for a timescale that suits their needs. Alternatively, customers can select from a range of pre-determined kit bundles, perfect for supplying a new facility with all of the essentials.

"The launch of Pulse Resale means all of our customers, no matter their budget, can have access to high-quality, market-leading equipment for their fitness facility."

Richard Sheen, Commercial Director.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Derby Leisure Facilities Refreshed

Following on from a successful tender with Derby Council and initial upgrade to the facilities at Derby Arena, Pulse Fitness has just completed a further upgrade at Springwood Leisure Centre.

All CV equipment has been replaced and a large free weight and functional area has been added to develop the fitness offering for the local community and future proof the facility for years to come.



FULL GYM BUNDLES TO BUY OR HIRE

A SIMPLE AFFORDABLE SOLUTION THAT WILL MEET YOUR BUDGET

Pulse Resale customers can build their own customised bundle by mixing and matching equipment and choosing to rent or purchase for a time period that suits their needs. Alternatively, customers can select from a range of pre-determined kit bundles, perfect for supplying a new facility with all the essentials.

**EVERYONE'S
TALKING ABOUT...
GYM INDUSTRY
RECOVERY**

This Spring, the UK government announced the end of all Covid-19 related restrictions in the UK. This meant the end of gyms and clubs having to enforce mandatory mask wearing in communal spaces and social distancing in and around the facilities, inviting a bigger sense of community back into fitness.

As a result of gyms reverting back to pre-pandemic ways, those operators that have battled through the last 2 years of uncertainty are now looking towards the future with optimistic expansion plans. One example of this is Pure Gym, who recently announced its plans to open an additional 700-900 Gyms in the UK by 2028. Its exciting expansion plan announcement came on the back of its 160,000 member gain in the initial months of 2022.

Meanwhile, Anytime Fitness, also announced they too would be expanding this year by adding a further 20 UK sites to its portfolio. The recently released European Health and Fitness Market Report from Deloitte further confirmed that those making optimistic plans to expand are right to do so; revealing that the number of gym members in Europe increased by 1 million during 2021.

However, while the fitness industry is facing an expansion frenzy, the same can't be said for UK retailers with many continuing to shut-up shop and move online. The Local Data Company predicted that 14 per cent of retail spaces will remain empty in the first half of the year. Yet the high street's loss is the fitness industries gain as many operators look to capitalise on these prime locations and cheaper rents by moving into empty retail spaces.

Pulse are grateful to be in the position to be able to respond to the expanding market by providing a range of products and services for expanding sites and new start-ups. You can read more about the newly launched Pulse Resale in this newsletter.

To ensure Pulse is fully equipped to continue to respond to the growing industry demand, we are also expanding our team. The last few months have seen us welcome brand new faces to all areas of our team from sales to operations. Each new appointment brings new skills, expertise and industry knowledge, helping us to continue to provide a market leading offering.

**£10K BUNDLE**

This is the ideal starter kit for private training spaces or new fitness facilities and includes nine pieces of equipment from Pulse's high-quality Cardiovascular range.

£25K BUNDLE

An optimum mix of 21 pieces of Pulse equipment; including Cardiovascular and Strength equipment, free weights and functional accessories.

**£50K BUNDLE**

40 pieces of re-conditioned Grade A equipment from across the Pulse range – perfectly suited to kitting out or upgrading an entire fitness suite.



GET IN TOUCH

Our team of experts are on hand to provide advice on how to select Resale equipment which complements your facility. Big or small, we have equipment to maximise any space. Get in touch or head to pulsereale.com to view the full range and find out more.

**Pulse Fitness signs Contract with Teme Leisure**

Pulse is delighted to announce a new contract with Teme Leisure, Shropshire's leading leisure provider. Pulse Fitness is set to complete works at both Cleobury Leisure Centre and South Shropshire Leisure Centre in Ludlow over the coming weeks.

Teme Ludlow will receive a complete overhaul with new CV kit, strength equipment and flooring in the gym, as well as updated wall and window graphics to give the space a fresh and modern aesthetic.

The ambitious project will see a new gym developed over two floors with a portion of the existing sports hall redeveloped to become a much-anticipated strength, conditioning and functional zone. Working in partnership with Teme Leisure, Pulse will create a truly exciting workout space complete with a turf track, functional rigs and plate loaded strength equipment.

Meanwhile, work at Teme Cleobury will see this important dual use site - shared with the school - receive new cardio equipment, dual use strength machines and a new free weights area.

SPOTLIGHT ON

THE TEAM AT PULSE FITNESS IS GROWING

Say hello to our new Head of Key Accounts & Approved Partners, Ben Ward and Regional Sales Manager for Midlands and North Wales, Thomas Warmer.

Ben has worked in the fitness industry for over six years. During that time he has supported both local and national clients and some of the biggest and most well-known global fitness brands. At Pulse, Ben will be working with private operators, leisure trusts, dealers, and hospitality clients, bringing his vast industry knowledge and expertise to the team.

Thomas has always had an interest in sport and fitness. He played Football for West Bromwich Albion before studying Sport and Exercise Science at Worcester University. His expertise in health and fitness has a strong foundation and he boasts many years of personal training, coaching and PE teaching. These experiences alongside creating and running a successful gym has provided Thomas with in-depth knowledge and understanding of the health and fitness space.

"I'm incredibly proud to be working with a team and brand that has such a great history within the fitness industry. This, coupled with a fantastic product portfolio means that we can work with our clients to bring a tailored solution to meet the changing demands within our industry."

Ben



"I'm excited to begin my journey to become an indispensable member of this forward-thinking team. I'm looking forward to bringing my client's visions of their new health and fitness spaces to life." Tom



PULSE'S 360-DEGREE OFFERING

The Pulse group has over 40 years of experience in the fitness industry. Over those four decades it has grown to include five different arms to the business; Pulse Fitness, Pulse Design & Build, Pulse Soccer, Pulse Solutions and the latest addition, Pulse Resale. Through each of its specialisms, Pulse offers the industry a full 360-degree leisure solution from market-leading fitness facilities to the eye-capturing marketing campaigns that promote them.

Pulse's dedicated in-house marketing team supports each Pulse project and installation by producing solutions that drive member engagement and promote sales. Over the last 15 years, the team has supported more than 2,000 UK projects including new site launches and fitness suite refurbishments.

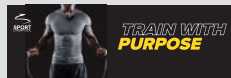
CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Pulse Fitness recently supplied the University of Liverpool with 120 pieces of market-leading gym equipment,

spanning Cardiovascular, Strength and Functional lines, to support the physical and mental well-being of its student base. Once the installation was complete, Pulse delivered a dedicated marketing campaign to the University's 5,000 gym members, communicating the fitness suite's transformation, new opening and introductory promotions.

The combination of Pulse's market-leading gym equipment, installation and creative content design, resulted in the University attracting an increase in members during the reopening.

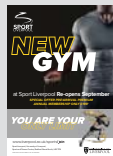
Wall Art



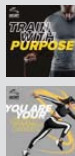
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Digital Media



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

Kevin Yates, CEO, TRIB3

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



Dave Wright, Creator & CEO, MYZONE

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