

health club management

SEPTEMBER 2012

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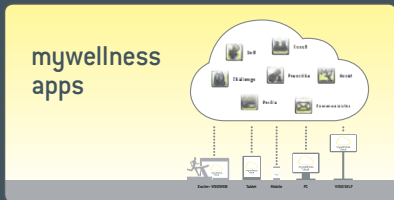
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health club management

SEPTEMBER 2012

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CARL LIEBERT

The president & CEO of
24 Hour Fitness on scrapping
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Personal training

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model obsolete?



INSPIRING INCLUSIVITY

The future of disability
fitness provision

GROWTH CURVE

Fitness First Middle
East reveals rapid
expansion plans



a leisure media
company
publication

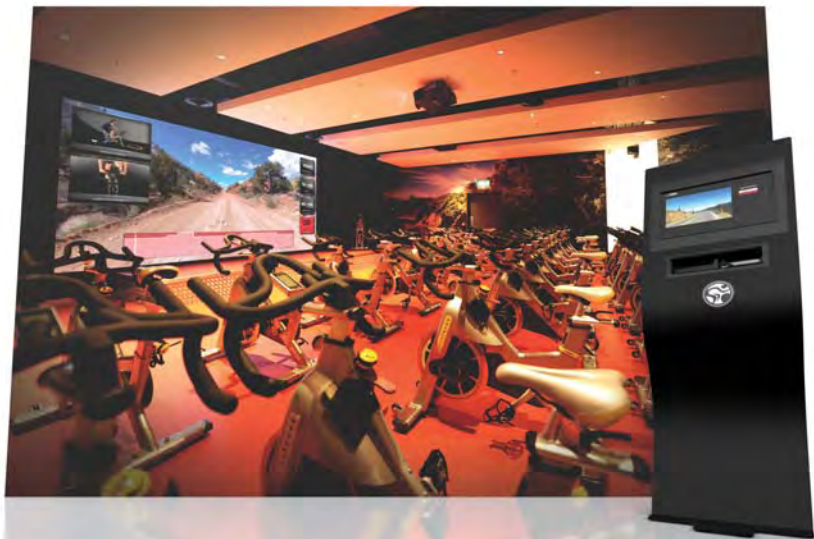


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HOW IT WAS ACHIEVED

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The Olympic Effect

Subscriptions

Denise Gildea
+44 (0)1462 471930

Circulation Manager

Michael Emmerson
+44 (0)1462 471932

Editor

Kate Cracknell
+44 (0)1462 471906

Editorial Director

Liz Terry
+44 (0)1462 431385

Assistant Editor

Katie Barnes
+44 (0)1462 471925

News Editor

Tom Walker
+44 (0)1462 471934

News Desk

Pete Hayman
+44 (0)1462 471938

Product Editor

Kate Corney
+44 (0)1462 471933

Designers

Andy Bundy
+44 (0)1462 471924

Ed Gallagher

+44 (0)1905 20198

Website Team

Dean Fox
+44 (0)1462 471900

Emma Harris
+44 (0)1462 471921

Tim Nash
+44 (0)1462 471917

Michael Paramore
+44 (0)1462 471926

Publisher

Jan Williams
+44 (0)1462 471909

Sales

John Challiner
+44 (0)1202 742968

Astrid Ros
+44 (0)1462 471911

Stephanie Rogers
+44 (0)1462 471903

Julie Badrick
+44 (0)1462 471919

David Hunt
+44 (0)1462 471902

Financial Controller
Sue Davis
+44 (0)1395 519398

Financial Administrator
Denise Gildea
+44 (0)1462 471930

Credit Controller
Rebekah Scott
+44 (0)1462 733477

'Our Greatest Team' certainly lived up to its billing at what proved to be a truly remarkable Olympics for Team GB, paving the way – dare we say it – for Britain to become the first ever host nation to witness an uplift in participation off the back of the Games.

Coming third on the medal table with a total of 29 golds, 17 silvers and 19 bronzes, Team GB has inspired us all. And it's done so with supreme performances not only in the 'sitting-down sports' in which we're famed to excel – cycling, rowing, sailing, equestrian – but also in track and field, triathlon, tennis, gymnastics, boxing. We've found new heroes in the likes of gold medal-winning heptathlete Jessica Ennis and long-distance runner Mo Farah, who have entered GB sport's Hall of Fame alongside the likes of Chris Hoy, Ben Ainslie, Steve Redgrave, Kelly Holmes. Put simply, we have a host of new role models and a far wider variety of sports that Brits now believe 'we can do'.

And it all happened here, close enough for us to touch, to feel the buzz of excitement, in a time zone where we could enjoy every golden moment. And somehow that proximity has combined with Team GB's

Gyms will need to be creative, actively marketing to new motivations among members and prospects, but the opportunity is there to tap into the UK's new-found enthusiasm for physical excellence

success story to make stepping into sport and activity feel more achievable: even before the Games were over, the media was reporting a massive surge in interest at sports clubs as diverse as rowing, gymnastics and volleyball.

That's great for leisure centres, many of which already have a strong sports offering. But what does it mean for the high street gym, which might see itself as one step removed from an immediate post-Olympic boom?

Tapping into the nation's current sporting enthusiasm could come in many guises. Some sports can be offered out of gyms, from running clubs to triathlon (see *HCM* Jan 12,

p50); the Brownlee brothers' gold and bronze medals represent a great opportunity to build on the already high levels of public interest in triathlon. One notch down, sport-specific training programmes could be offered for those who are either venturing into a new sport or else hoping to take the next step in an existing sporting hobby: one need look no further than Team GB's domination of the velodrome to find inspiration for peak performance group cycling sessions in gyms, for example.

And then there are the marketing-based opportunities which are open to all operators, as they simply require innovation in the way existing services are packaged and spoken about. Whether that's reaching out to people who want 'abs like Ennis' or creating heptathlon-themed functional group training formats, gyms can create programmes and classes that harness the post-Olympic buzz.

The delivery of a long-term legacy will remain a challenge, and must encompass everything from school sports policy to skills development in the fitness sector. Seb Coe has also accepted a new role as Olympic legacy ambassador; gyms may be able to gain the support of his team in creating a physical activity legacy. Nevertheless, there's an opportunity to be seized right now while interest is fresh. For operators directly offering sport, that's likely to mean additional capacity, catering for the influx with no waiting lists. Gyms will need to be more creative, actively marketing to new motivations among members and prospects, but the opportunity is still there to tap into the UK's new-found enthusiasm for physical excellence.

Kate Cracknell, editor – katecracknell@leisuremedia.com / twitter: @HealthClubKate
To share your thoughts on this topic, visit www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/blog



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CONTACT US The Leisure Media Company Ltd, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1DJ UK
SUBS Tel: +44 (0)1462 471915 Fax: +44 (0)1462 433909

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welcome to HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT



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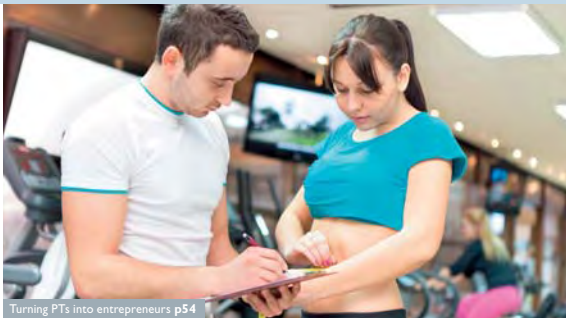
In new research, US scientists have discovered 'beige fat' – cells which they believe have the ability to burn body fat when stimulated by a hormone released during exercise

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Health clubs are responding to the need for more holistic weight-loss programmes and are reporting great results for their members, says Dawn Tuckwell



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buyers' guide:

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Fitness First Middle East has grown from 16 to 32 clubs since April 2011, and business is growing rapidly. Kate Cracknell talks to its management team about its recipe for success

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An update from some of the exhibitors attending this year's LIW

write to reply



Do you have a strong opinion or disagree with somebody else's views on the industry? If so, we'd love to hear from you – email: healthclub@leisuremedia.com



HIT: Members will pay a premium for quicker, more visible results

hit: a role to play in exceeding member expectations

I really enjoyed your recent series on high-intensity interval training (HIT), a new trend that currently seems to be generating lots of discussion from the industry (see *HCM* July 12, p40, and *HCM* Aug 12, p42).

Our experience at HiitGirl – a new 30-minute, full-body workout for women – is that customers understand and welcome the trade-off with HIT training. It's hard work, but only for a limited time. They also find it easier to fit into their schedule, plus the benefits arrive surprisingly quickly.

We've noticed that our customers are quite happy to pay more for something that offers such a high level of engagement and visible results.

However HIT training, like all new trends, shouldn't be seen as an 'all or nothing' option. Rather it's another useful tool for our industry to build great experiences that keep people coming back.

There's always the danger that the latest science is simply transplanted into a commercial environment, without too much consideration for the customer experience. As a commercial service industry, we still need to focus on what customers value and then shape experiences that meet – and hopefully exceed – their expectations. HIT training looks set to play a useful part in this.

susan dyson
founder, hiitgirl.com

david lloyd leisure: rewarding member loyalty

I was interested to read your recent feature on member reward schemes (see *HCM* July 12, p45). Recognising the potential of such schemes to drive loyalty among members, David Lloyd Leisure launched its own exclusive online member rewards scheme – DL Rewards – in June. Available at most of our 80 UK clubs, it's designed to acknowledge the loyalty of those who have retained their membership for more than two years.

The scheme uses personalised membership cards, with rewards increasing based on the length of continuous membership. The DL Rewards Bronze card (over two years' continuous membership) offers 3 per cent off at DL Cafébar plus two guest passes. DL Rewards Silver card (over four years) gives 5 per cent off at DL Cafébar, plus four guest passes. And DL Rewards Gold card (over six years) offers 7 per cent off at DL Cafébar, plus six guest passes. This is in addition to a number of member benefits that we offer, such as discounts on holidays.

It's our way of saying thank you to our members for their loyalty, demonstrating how much we value them every time they come in to our clubs.

huw davies-thomas
head of marketing communications,
david lloyd leisure

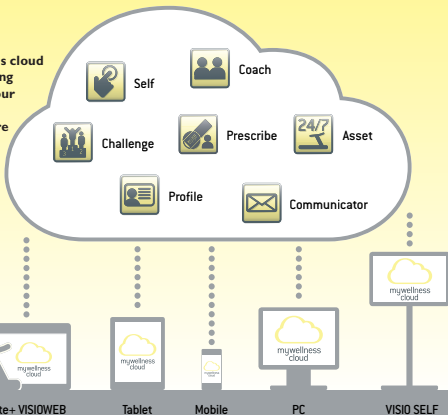


Loyal members get discounts at the DL Cafébar, or even on holidays



Become a connected club with Technogym and discover how simple it is to truly connect your equipment and your members. mywellness cloud launches in the UK at LIW. For demonstrations and seminars please visit us in Hall 19 Stand H381.

mywellness cloud
- connecting you and your members, everywhere



THE FUTURE IS DIGITAL

Following recent trends in technology and the wellness industry, Technogym has invested heavily in research and development to create a comprehensive online Wellness platform providing businesses and end users with a complete Wellness solution: mywellness cloud - the very latest development to put your business at the cutting edge.

Benefit from the ability to be in constant contact with your customers, wherever they are: in the gym, on the move or at home. Imagine your installed equipment always monitored and providing you and your end users with the information that really matters.

For the End User

mywellness cloud lets end users download the app and access their account from wherever they are:

- **In the gym:** Using VISIOWEB, a web enabled digital platform interface available on Technogym cardiovascular equipment, or from VISIOSELF, the new interactive touch-screen kiosk
- **On the move:** from a SMARTPHONE, using the mywellness mobile application
- **At home:** from a TABLET or a PC, using the mywellness.com website

For Your Business

mywellness cloud provides a single access point for all the professional applications. This completely flexible, modular and scalable platform that allows you to offer a tailored approach to your users via seven professional apps:

PROFILE: Tailored wellness experience

PROFILE is an innovative, evidence-based application that offers your facility insights into the motives of why existing and target members workout. Based on extensive research conducted with the IULM University (Milan), Technogym developed the Aspiration Finder™ questionnaire, a unique tool for understanding end users and easily assess their deepest motivation for exercising.

PRESCRIBE: Personalised training programme
PRESCRIBE allows operators to differentiate through superior quality of service by creating truly personalised programmes for their users. Each programme is stored in the TGS Key, a personal device that sets up the equipment and guides the user throughout the entire session. The results are automatically collected and used to monitor progress.

SELF: Automated programme assignment

With the SELF application users can create a training programme in seconds without supervision. The programme is selected from a library according to the user's real needs, sports or aspirations.

COACH: Indoor & outdoor lifestyle management

COACH extends the operator role into a personal coach. Operators can track and assess nutritional and lifestyle habits, create personalised action plans and interact in a new way to increase contact with users.

ODYSSEY KNEBWORTH

mywellness cloud is already proving a great success. Ian Riches, Club Director at Odyssey Knebworth has been trialling mywellness cloud for 6 months. Riches states, "Mywellness Cloud has provided us with a fresh approach to engage members. We've run a number of challenges for members to participate in, using the CHALLENGE application; feedback has been great, and members have really embraced the technology."

CHALLENGE: Interactive engagement and competitions
Users can join challenges you create, via the web, their smartphone or directly from VISIOWEB on the equipment, and VISIOSELF touch-screen kiosks. By improving their ranking, winning challenges and prizes, they will spend more time in your facility.

COMMUNICATOR: Improve marketing and secondary revenues
COMMUNICATOR can transform each VISIOWEB unit into a powerful marketing tool. Promote activities, products and services, promotions, co-marketing and surveys directly through the interactive touch screen display.

ASSET: Equipment monitoring
ASSET remotely monitors equipment using VISIOWEB. Have access to a dashboard of equipment usage and uptime.

Newest 'legacy gym' to open in County Durham

A new 'legacy gym' – part of a joint initiative between Durham County Council (DCC) and the Changing the Physical Activity Landscape Project – has been unveiled at Leadgate Community Centre.

The 35q m (325q ft) facility offers nine pieces of equipment from Technogym and is the 13th gym of its kind to open.

It follows the success of the Wellness on Wheels scheme, DCC's mobile gym which travels around the county to provide communities with access to fitness facilities.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=c2a9H>



YMCA LSW's Richard James (far left) at the launch

Fitness upgrade for two YMCA London facilities

YMCA London South West's (YMCA LSW) Y+ Fitness gyms – Surbiton and Hawker Centre, Kingston – are being transformed as part of refurbishment programmes at both locations. The 285sq m (3,068sq ft) facility at YMCA Surbiton has already been unveiled following its facelift, with 32 stations of Precor cardiovascular equipment installed as part of the project.

Meanwhile, the revamp of the IFI-accredited 225sq m (2,422sq ft) facility at YMCA Hawker Centre forms part of a wider development and will feature a new studio when complete.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=h47c>

Opening date for Sandown leisure centre's new gym

Isle of Wight Council will open the new Tone Zone gym and refurbished pool at Sandown's Heights Leisure Centre on 15 October – two weeks later than planned.

The first of a two-phase redevelopment incurred delays due to poor weather in early summer, with the new gym housing 70 stations of Life Fitness equipment.

Visitors can use the current Tone Zone gym – plus the health suite – until the new facilities open, while swimming is available at Newport's Medina Leisure Centre.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=e9G7O>

Legacy effects 'already visible'

The London 2012 Games have had an immediate impact on the UK's sports sector – from grassroots levels right up to elite sport. Evidence suggests that sports clubs, swimming pools and leisure centres – as well as national governing bodies – have seen an increase in the number of people asking for advice on how to get involved in organised sport.

Swimming, cycling and rowing clubs have all experienced increased interest due to Team GB securing medals, while less prominent sports – including archery – have also benefited from Olympic media coverage.

British Cycling president Brian Cookson has predicted that Bradley Wiggins becoming the most decorated British Olympian of all time – as well as his historic Tour de France victory – will raise the profile of the sport throughout the UK – and result in more people taking up cycling.

Meanwhile, British Rowing experienced an enormous surge in traffic to its website, with a tenfold increase in the regular number of unique visitors following the historic victory of Helen Glover and Heather Stanning in the women's pair at Eton Dorney.



Rowing and swimming are among the activities to have benefited

More than 5,500 people used the search facility on the website to find their nearest rowing club on the day of the Olympic win, far exceeding the highest figure recorded during the Beijing Games.

Across the UK, rowing clubs were receiving applications for 'learn to row' courses within 10 minutes of the first gold medal being won.

To support clubs and centres in capitalising on the increased interest, Sport England has launched its digital legacy service, 'spogo' (www.spogo.co.uk), in partnership with the FIA. The customer-facing service aims to make searching and finding physical activities as simple as other consumer-friendly online services. Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=x6a3P>

Enfield leisure centre: £2m renovation

Fusion Lifestyle has unveiled the new-look Albany Leisure Centre in Enfield, London, after completing work on an eight-month redevelopment programme costing £2m.

The facility contains a large gym with more than 70 stations of Life Fitness equipment and a free weights area, two new exercise studios, and an indoor group cycling studio. A 25m swimming pool with a separate learner pool and new changing areas are also among the facilities, as well as a new café and an improved entrance and reception area.

Albany Leisure Centre is one of more than 60 leisure facilities across London and the south-east run by Fusion Lifestyle, with the project part of a wider investment in Enfield provision. Tim Mills, director of business development, says: "This has been



The revamped centre now includes a 70-station gym by Life Fitness

part of an £8.9m development programme of leisure centres in Enfield on behalf of Enfield Council. We also look forward to the opening of an all-new Southgate Leisure Centre in the autumn and feel sure that this will benefit the local community in the same way." Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=U4fJZ>

edited by tom walker, email: tomwalker@leisuremedia.com

FIA CEO calls for unity on legacy

Fitness Industry Association (FIA) CEO David Stalker has called on all political parties and stakeholders across the leisure sector to join forces to ensure a lasting legacy from the 2012 London Olympics.

In a passionate blog post, Stalker heralded the Olympics as a "magical event" and added that to squander the chance of benefiting from the mood created by the Games would be "criminally negligent".

Stalker added: "Creating a lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games is too important for knee-jerk decisions and party political positioning.

"Even before the Games, we learnt that Tony Blair was to return as a policy advisor to Labour on legacy. Yesterday we had the announcement that Seb Coe would take up the same role for the government. My hope is



Stalker says the Games' legacy is "too important" for party politicising

that they pick up the phone to each other and tackle this challenge hand-in-hand."

Stalker also offered seven key recommendations for legacy plans, which include ensuring that the thousands of volunteers who helped make the Games aren't "lost" as a resource. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d8D3w>*

New report: 'Never too late to exercise'

A new study has shown that middle-aged adults who regularly engage in leisure-time physical activity for more than a decade may benefit from lower levels of inflammation in later life – and, as a result, suffer fewer heart problems.

The research, which was funded by University College London and published in the latest issue of the American Heart Association's journal *Circulation*, also suggests that it is especially important for older people to be active to prevent heart disease.

For the study, more than 4,200 participants in the UK with an average age of 49 reported the duration and frequency of their leisure-time physical activities – such as brisk



The research has underlined the importance of exercise in older people

walking, vigorous gardening, cycling and sports. Results showed active participants at baseline had lower C-reactive protein and interleukin-6 levels – two proteins in the blood whose increased levels indicate inflammation. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Z6d8L>*

Technogym kits out £26m Inspire: Luton centre

The new £26m Inspire: Luton Sports Village has opened. Active Luton will manage the new complex, which was designed by S&P Architects and incorporates an Olympic-size 50m swimming pool, a competition-standard diving structure and a health club.

The gym features a 100-station Technogym fitness suite, a Technogym group cycle room and a group exercise space for dancing classes as well as an aerobics studio. It also houses the Bedfordshire town's largest sports hall. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=p2P3g>*

£750,000 investment planned for Rugeley facility

Wigan Leisure and Cultural Trust is planning to invest £750,000 in extending and improving the fitness offer at Staffordshire's Rugeley Leisure Centre.

A Profiles Health and Fitness Suite is to be introduced, with the extension adding 130sq m (1,399sq ft) to the gym – creating a total floorspace of 379sq m (4,080sq ft).

The fitness suite will contain 80 pieces of Technogym equipment if approved, with the trust having submitted its plans for the scheme to Cannock Chase Council.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=1517X>



The gym includes a 40 stations of Precor CV kit

£6m Godalming Leisure Centre opens its doors

Waverley Borough Council has opened the new £6m Godalming Leisure Centre, which took just over a year to complete.

ISG delivered the Pozzoni-designed facility, which is operated by DC Leisure and houses a 60-station gym – 40 stations of which are Precor cardio equipment.

The rest of the first-floor fitness suite contains around 20 stations of resistance equipment from Technogym, with users able to tailor sessions to tone, build up muscle and improve general fitness.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=g108N>

Upgrade programme for Redditch leisure facilities

Redditch leisure centres are to undergo a programme of improvements, while also offering reduced prices on some membership packages, under plans unveiled by the local authority.

Arrow Vale Sports Centre will see new CV and strength kit in its fitness suite, which is also to be redecorated under Redditch Borough Council proposals. The centre will now offer exercise-to-music classes in an expanded membership package, which is being cut from £22 to £16 a month. *Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=U7E5H>*



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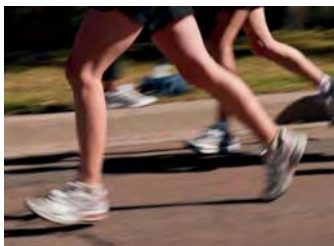
New health plan for Wales

The Welsh Government has vowed to boost awareness of “positive lifestyle improvements” such as regular exercise as part of a major new strategy to reduce heart disease by 2016.

Health minister Lesley Griffiths has published a draft version of its *Together For Health – A Cardiac Delivery Plan*, which is subject to consultation until 26 October.

Working with partners including the NHS, the Welsh Government will focus on prevention, earlier diagnosis and treatment to reduce heart disease deaths. Among the outcomes expected for people will be an improvement in both the access and co-ordination of services that address risk levels – such as exercise referral.

Meanwhile, the Welsh Government will promote the use of exercise in reducing heart



Exercise is an important part of the Welsh Government's new strategy

disease and will help all Welsh people to take responsibility for their own health.

Griffiths says: “We must do more to prevent avoidable cardiac disease. Where cardiac disease does occur, we want to focus on prompt diagnosis and the best treatment.”

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=14X7z>

2012 facility could ‘revolutionise healthcare’

The London 2012 anti-doping facilities will be developed after the Olympic and Paralympic Games into a world-class resource that could help revolutionise healthcare. The medical facilities – purpose-built for London 2012 – will be turned into the world’s first MRC-NIHR Phenome Centre, designed to enable researchers to explore the characteristics of disease in order to develop new drugs and treatments for patients.

The aim is to help develop better and more targeted treatment for patients by investigating the phenome patterns of patients and volunteers, by analysing samples – usually blood or urine – very rapidly and on an unprecedented scale.

This will help researchers discover new ‘biomarkers’ to explain why one individual or population may be more susceptible to a disease than another. The knowledge will then aid scientists in finding new, safer and more targeted treatments.

The new centre will be funded over five years by an investment of €5m each from the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Department of Health’s National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). It will build on



The centre was purpose-built for the London 2012 Olympic Games

and develop the state-of-the-art equipment and expertise of the London 2012 anti-doping facilities, provided by pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline and operated by King’s College London.

Health secretary Andrew Lansley says: “Our investment in this new centre, the first of its kind, promises better targeted treatments for patients with a wide range of common diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and dementia.

“Patients will benefit from faster and more accurate diagnosis, and researchers will be able to develop new drugs and treatments as we understand more about the characteristics of diseases and new sub-types of diseases are discovered.” Details: <http://lei.sr?a=BvY1h>

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“We have worked with Keiser UK for over a decade and have always been impressed by the M3 Bike because of its quality engineering and excellent performance. Indoor cycling is one of our most popular classes so it is vital that we can offer our members and instructors a well designed and quality bike.”

Rob Beale,
Head of Sports Health & Fitness
at David Lloyd Leisure

Keiser UK Ltd
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Fitness operator Frame opens second London site

Independently-owned health club operator Frame has opened its second site in Queen's Park, north-west London.

Frame – an upscale concept which specialises in dance, fitness, yoga and pilates classes – already operates a club in Shoreditch, north-east London.

Both studios have an ultra modern décor and changing facilities, with the Frame clubs offering a pay-as-you-go model, as well as monthly membership for £199. A Frame Card provides discounts for topping up in a similar way to Transport for London's Oyster card.

Half-memberships are also available, but these do not include access to the signature Frame Camp or Reformer Pilates classes.

Frame Camp is an intensive cardio interval training workout which uses Star Trac's E-TRX treadmills. The classes – which have been designed to appeal to running enthusiasts – mix interval running with conditioning exercises in a half-hour class, and their popularity has also resulted in the creation of the Hour of Power class, a 60-minute version of the class.



The upscale operator uses a membership system similar to loyalty cards, with monthly memberships at £199

Pip Black, Frame co-owner, says: "Our clients are young and busy, so we have created classes that are fun, but also short and effective.

"Frame Camp, our high-intensity treadmill and conditioning class, allows our clients to get the same benefits as running outdoors

but without being seen working up a sweat in the street.

"In fact, the results will be even better as the class uses high-intensity intervals, encouraging participants to really push themselves."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=A323N>

Khalid Ismail to expand Lion's Den Gym – plans new sites

British Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) star Khalid Ismail has confirmed plans to expand his Lion's Den Gym (LDG) in Chadwell Heath, north-east London.

The gym, one of two owned by the London fighter, is currently being turned into the largest centre for martial arts in London.

The expanded gym will feature 1,400sq m (15,000sq ft) of training space, including specialist strength and training facilities alongside a brand new octagon boxing ring.

Scheduled to be completed this month, the new world-class combat and matting facilities will be complemented by three separate studio spaces, a group cycling suite, and a 'Women Only Zone'. The gym's current cardio training space is also due to be extended.

Members will be able to recharge and relax after a hard workout in the new LDG café.

Ismail hopes to welcome new members as soon as the gym launches, opening the world of MMA to a host of new participants.

As well as carving a career in the world of MMA, most recently competing in the UCMMA, Ismail has channelled his passion for martial arts and fitness into his LDG enterprise since 2006, when the Chadwell Heath gym was first opened. Four years later, Ismail expanded his empire, opening



The Lion's Den gym will include 1,400sq m of MMA training space, making it the largest of its kind in London

the Romford branch, funded through re-investing capital following the success of LDG's first site.

Under a 10-year plan for the business, Ismail is now looking to consolidate and grow existing facilities at a rate that will enable further investment in new branches.

Speaking to *Health Club Management*, Ismail said: "There is definitely a call for more centres like ours to be opened in and

around London. The riots were about people being drawn into an atmosphere and a way of thinking which is destructive.

"Martial arts and training teaches self-sacrifice, discipline, self-respect, honour, and can give someone a real sense of achievement. I know how valuable having somewhere like our centres to go can be – not just for youngsters, but for everyone."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=l3W3Y>

A functional zone TRANSFORMATION..

Headed up by General Manager Helen Muller, David Lloyd Leisure Oxford is one of the top performing clubs in the chain for personal training. The club has 4,000 members, has been open for eight years and has been nominated for Club of the Year within the David Lloyd Leisure group. Helen says the secret of the club's success is 'having highly trained staff who are passionate about what they do'.

Helen was approached by two of the personal trainers at the club, Simon and Nye, with the idea of converting a disused, outdoor bike shed into a functional zone with a cross training feel. Helen approached David Lloyd Leisure head office with the plan needing substantial investment in November and the area was ready to go early spring – a 'great testament' to what can be achieved. Helen turned to Escape Fitness to provide a complete solution from a bespoke flooring system to equipment and branding for the area.

Escape's brief was to create an area including equipment, flooring and motivational designs to decorate the walls but with the added challenge of it being partially open to the elements. The equipment and flooring had to be durable and weatherproof as well as easy to maintain with drain outlets to allow any water to drain away. Escape's flooring specialist, Paul Lipscombe researched what type of flooring would withstand

being outdoors and still look great at the same time and a newly developed, seamless, wet-pour flooring solution was selected that is incredibly durable. David Lloyd's Personal Trainer Studio Coordinator, Simon Greenwood said:

"We were looking for variety that was appealing to our members and also ourselves to increase the scope for training possibilities."

He continued: "The Escape Octagon is definitely my favourite piece – it's unique because it is so versatile. There are so many things you can do on it and off it."

David Lloyd Leisure selected the Escape Fitness Octagon as the focal point for the new area. To complement that, they chose Bulgarian bags, Steel Bells, Bumper Discs, Escape Core Bags and, of course, the TRX Suspension Trainer.

They also chose Escape Fitness' brand new Plyo Soft Boxes, the Olympic Bar, heavy chains, the Reebok punch bag, the agility grid, speed ladder, hurdles, the Medicine Ball Reactor and speed resistors. The new space was going to be totally functional!

THE OUTCOME?

Helen says the area is fantastic with a 'real urban, rough feel to it' and has really utilised a space that was never used. Initially, it was a challenge for staff to encourage members to break their usual training habits and use the new area because it is a little out of the way but once members have experienced it they

"Members have given the new functional zone the thumbs up and it's being used by all sorts of members."
Helen Muller, General Manager

love the equipment and the atmosphere. It is also being utilised by the female members who are part of a 12 week 'lose and shape up' programme, proving that the area and equipment can be used by anyone of any fitness level. Helen is very encouraged that the members have given the new functional zone the thumbs up and it is being used by "all sorts of members".

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SUPPLIER & TRAINING

DLL launches mobile app for UK market

Health club operator David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) has launched a free UK mobile app aimed at both members and non-members.

The app is currently available for iPhone, iPod and iPad devices (and soon to be available on android), and includes a club finder and downloadable timetables for courses and classes. It also features searchable profiles of personal trainers and tennis coaches, as well as introductory exercise video guides and photo galleries of club facilities.

Additional services are available for members, as DLL hopes the app will work as a retention tool. These services include customised dashboard enabling users to view the information that matters to them; club 'check-in', allowing members to record their club visits; timetables to view and download schedules for courses and group exercise classes; and a 'find an expert' function, allowing the search and reviewing of profiles of personal trainers and tennis coaches.

According to DLL head of digital marketing strategy David Brosse, the app will form the



The app will work as a retention tool for the operator

"initial building block for the provision of many new and exciting services." He adds: "New features for our app could include mobile bookings, music services, mobile payments, and the provision of engaging and educational videos; all of which will be a must for all health and fitness enthusiasts."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=4RoW5>

Active IQ launches new kids' activity course



IMAGE: ALIANCE5HUTTERSTOCK.COM

The qualification has been designed to provide exercise professionals with skills required to cater for toddlers

Awarding organisation Active IQ has announced the launch of its new Level 2 Certificate in Delivering Physical Activities to Children Under 5, which is available from 1 October. The new course has been designed to provide health and fitness professionals with a chance to develop the specific skills and knowledge required to cater for the under-five age group.

Early Learning Goals and personal development are among the six areas featured within the course, which will help learners to promote healthy living to families through safe activities.

Active IQ operations director Suzy Gunn says: "This qualification is ideal for learners who would like to be accredited to work with children under five years of age."

"It's an area that we know has received a growing amount of interest within the active leisure sector, so we wanted to design a qualification that really met the specialist criteria and skillset required to co-ordinate activities for such young children."

Visit the link below for more information about the new Level 2 Certificate in Delivering Physical Activities to Children Under 5. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=p966p>

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in brief...

24 Hour Fitness up for sale

New York-based private equity firm Forstmann Little & Company is putting US health club chain 24 Hour Fitness up for sale, and is reported to have hired Goldman Sachs to run the auction process.

24 Hour Fitness has also sold all 18 of its California Fitness-branded clubs in Asia to The Ansa Group. Financial terms of the sale have not been disclosed.

See p32 for an interview with Carl Liebert, CEO of 24 Hour Fitness.

cityfitness expands in NZ

cityfitness, the New Zealand-owned health and fitness group, has signed an agreement to operate out of the old Harbour Fitness in Wairau Park, Auckland. "We're thrilled to bring this club into the cityfitness family and feel this was a natural fit," says Dominic Rogerson, cityfitness MD.

All existing Harbour Fitness memberships will be honoured. In addition to having access to cityfitness gyms in Auckland, Harbour Fitness members will gain travel privileges to cityfitness' 21 gyms across New Zealand.

cityfitness began with one club in Porirua in 2000 and has steadily grown to 21 clubs nationwide over the last 12 years, including 11 in the last three years. It has also invested heavily in innovations over recent years, adding elements such as Hot Yoga and pilates studios, TRX suspension training, CrossFit and Boxmaster sessions.

VAT increase on Spanish clubs

VAT paid by health club operators across Spain is to increase from the current rate of 8 per cent to 21 per cent later this year.

There is concern among stakeholders in the Spanish fitness industry that the VAT rate rise will hit the already under-

pressure membership numbers at health clubs. When neighbouring Portugal increased its VAT rate on health clubs in 2011 – from 5 per cent to 23 per cent – the Portuguese trade association AGAP said it had directly resulted in over 100,000 people cancelling their memberships.

Nick Coult, owner of Portuguese premium low-cost chain Fitness Hut, says the effects of the rate hike in Portugal were immediate. "Spanish clubs are in for a really rough ride," he says. "Since the increase in VAT, Portuguese clubs have suffered a 16 per cent decline in memberships, and national penetration has dropped to 4.6 per cent."

Catalan sports facilities have already agreed to establish an association bringing together all stakeholders of the Catalan fitness sector to lobby against the VAT rise.



When Portugal increased VAT, clubs lost over 100,000 members through cancellations

New ladies-only offering for Australia

EnVie, a new ladies-only gym franchise launched in Australia, has announced plans to open a number of clubs in the country's main cities.

Founded by entrepreneur Dave Hundt, the company is currently in talks to secure its first site in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane.

Hundt is an industry veteran who acquired the Australian rights to the Contours Express franchise in 2004 and describes the EnVie concept as having been "tailored to today's woman".

"EnVie is an entirely new concept in fitness, which brings together the very best elements from a range of fitness and franchise models to build a leading-edge, world-class franchise," Hundt says on the company website.



The EnVie brand is designed for today's woman, says founder Dave Hundt



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The Premium-branded HealthCity club is situated on the affluent Champs Elysées in Paris

HealthCity opens first Paris clubs

Netherlands-based health club operation HealthCity International – which acquired all Fitness First clubs in Benelux, France, Spain and Italy in 2011 – has launched its first HealthCity club in Paris, taking it to a total of 11 clubs in France.

The Premium facility, which opened on 25 June, is located on the world-famous Champs Elysées. In addition to a Matrix-equipped gym, the 2,000sq m club offers a group exercise studio and separate RPM (group cycling) studio. There is also a towel service, a sauna and hammam in each changing room, a lounge area with complimentary tea and coffee, and a range of events for members.

Membership at the new club costs around €80 a month, with management highlighting its 'high service levels'.

Two further French sites are due to open imminently. A 2,000sq m Premium club is scheduled to launch in Boulogne, an affluent area on the outskirts of Paris, in October, offering similar facilities to the Champs Elysées club.

Meanwhile, a 1,700sq m 'Basic' club will launch in Crozatier, in the 12th arrondissement of the capital, in November. Although a lower-cost offering – around €45 a month – this club will also offer the latest kit from Matrix, as well as two group exercise studios and a lounge.

HealthCity operates 260 clubs across Europe, with four distinct categories: Premium, distinguished by high service standards and prime locations; All-inclusive; premium low-cost format Basic; and ladies-only offering Lady Fit.

in brief...

24 Hour Fitness & Team USA

US-based health club operator 24 Hour Fitness has announced the extension of its relationship with the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). 24 Hour, which has sponsored the US Olympic and Paralympic teams since Athens in 2004, has confirmed that it will continue its sponsorship for the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Fitness First: Abu Dhabi Mall

Fitness First Middle East opened the doors to its latest club last month.

The new facility, located in Abu Dhabi Mall, is said to be the group's flagship site. The 2,350sq m club caters for men and women and offers a dedicated ladies-only facility, extensive free weights and 'freestyle' functional areas, group exercise studios, changing rooms with sauna and relaxation area, and an exclusive members' lounge.

This new opening follows the launch, at the end of May, of the 2,000sq m Dalma Mall Abu Dhabi club. Fitness First Middle East is also due to open its first club in Kuwait this month, as well as a second club in Qatar.

See p48 for an in-depth report on the Fitness First Middle East business.

W South Beach – on the beach

W South Beach in Miami has embraced the trend towards outdoor fitness with the launch of two new beach-based classes: Beach Yoga, and Healthy Sweaty Beach Boot Camp.

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Chris Rock joins CYBEX as new training manager

CYBEX International UK has appointed Chris Rock as its new international training manager. With more than 10 years' experience in the health and fitness industry, Rock joins CYBEX from the University of Bristol, where he worked as a health and fitness supervisor and specialist instructor at the University's Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health.

In his new role, Rock will work with the CYBEX Research Institute to deliver training and research findings to CYBEX's internal and external networks. This will include CYBEX staff, equipment distributors and re-sellers, as well as personal trainers and fitness instructors.

Commenting on the new appointment, Rob Thurston, CYBEX UK's commercial director, says: "We've known Chris for a number of years through our relationship with the University of Bristol, and we're delighted to confirm his appointment as international training manager."



Antony Davies: Responsible for South West region

Gladstone further expands sales team

Gladstone Health and Leisure has expanded its sales team for the second time this year following a territory-based restructure. Antony Davies and Deborah Blythe will manage the South West and Midlands regions respectively.

Davies has a background in software, having worked for Japanese company Amano, which supplies time, attendance and access control solutions, as well as software house Open GI, providing back office solutions to the insurance market.

Blythe has been in the health and fitness industry for 15 years and began her career with a small, independent chain before moving to LivingWell as a sales manager and Total Fitness as a regional sales manager.

Elena Lapetra joins Stairmaster

Core Fitness, the owner of StairMaster and distributor of Schwinn Fitness indoor cycling bikes, has announced the opening of a new office in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

As part of the move, the company has appointed Elena Lapetra its new sales manager. Lapetra was previously business development manager at Inspirit – formerly the exclusive UK distributor for the Schwinn indoor cycle series and StairMaster Stepmill.

Lapetra is an industry veteran whose career has also included a stint at Amer Sports, where she held a number of roles, including working on the Amer-owned Precor brand of fitness equipment.

Frank O'Rourke, Stairmaster's international sales director, says: "The UK is an incredibly important market for us. We're thrilled to open a direct office, with someone of Elena's calibre to lead the business over the coming years."

Core Fitness is owned by Michael Bruno, who acquired the StairMaster brand and the commercial licence rights to Schwinn Fitness.



Lapetra previously worked with the Schwinn brand

Headquartered in Vancouver, Washington, US the company markets and distributes the StairMaster products.

Phil Collins joins Right Directions team

Phil Collins, the former national president of the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM), has joined leisure safety and quality management specialist company Right Directions as its business development director.

In his new role Collins – who most recently was chief executive of Hertsmere Leisure – will work with local authorities, contractors and trusts, as well as private sector clubs, to encourage adoption of these nationally recognised standards.

Right Directions delivers Sport England's quality assurance scheme Quest, as well as the FIA's Code of Practice. Collins was part of the team that first introduced Quest in the mid-1990s and led the first multi-site registration of the ISO9001 quality management mark.

He says: "I have been a lifelong advocate of the benefits of providing a high quality, continuously improving service and so the role



Collins helped introduce Quest in the mid-1990s

at Right Directions is a great opportunity for me. We have extensive plans for the next 12 months and I'm excited about the direction of the business and the fresh challenge it will offer me."

Steven Sykes named sales director at Pavigym

Steven Sykes has been named sales director of technical sports flooring company Pavigym.

He has been tasked with expanding the Pavigym product range within the UK market.

Pavigym's plans include offering a more localised support structure to the UK market and the current Pavigym distributors, while

also promoting the company's new functional Zone 2.0 solution. Sykes will report directly to chief executive Marcos Requena.

Sykes is a fitness industry veteran, including eight years at Escape Fitness in a number of roles. He has also been in charge of running the Tube Boxing business.

PEOPLE PROFILE



Zoe Cooper

The swimming academy manager for the Swimming Teachers Association (STA) reached the final of this year's *Britain's Got Talent* as part of the synchronised swimming team Aquabatique

How many years have you worked in the health and fitness industry?

Ten years - since 2002.

How did your career progress?

I started out as a casual lifeguard while studying for A levels and through my university years. After graduating with first class honours in psychology, health and exercise, I worked as a netball development officer for England Netball. I then stayed in sports development, progressing to the role of club and volunteer development officer for a local authority before moving to the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and finally to the Swimming Teachers Association (STA) in 2010 to manage the new Shropshire Swim Academy.

Have you always been a swimmer?

I didn't learn to swim until I was seven years old. In fact, I was petrified of putting my face underwater, so it seems ironic that I now spend most of my time upside-down, submerged in water. During my teens I was involved in lots of sports, but my mum noticed I had a special talent for dance, swimming and gymnastics. Synchronised swimming combines all three of these sports, so my mum suggested I give it a go.

How did you get involved with Aquabatique?

I've known the other members of Aquabatique for a number of years and have been performing at events and shows via Aquabatique's management agency Aquabatrix. The four of us were selected specifically for *Britain's Got Talent* by Aquabatique. It was an intense internal trial process, and we were all selected for our individual strengths - mine being my flexibility and strength within the water.

Did the group's success on the show come as a surprise to you?

We honestly didn't have a clue how the public would perceive us, but naturally

being competitive athletes we wanted to go all the way. All we could do was work our hardest to do the best performance possible - we trained up to 10 hours a day in the water to perfect the routines and ran, swam and did other cardiovascular exercise to ensure we were physically fit, strong and flexible. In reaching the live final, I think we successfully achieved our aim.

What impact has your success made on young people wanting to try synchronised swimming?

It's hard to measure the impact, but it has certainly raised the profile of the sport. All the synchronised swimming clubs have seen an influx of new swimmers at the grassroots end of their programmes, while the STA has witnessed an increase in the number of swimming teachers booking onto its synchronised swimming course.

How can the fitness sector play a part in preventative healthcare?

Taking part in physical activity has not only been proven to improve health and physical wellbeing but also mental health.

The fitness and leisure industry has already been proactive by linking with the NHS and other external organisations in the past to encourage non-sporty types to get active. But thinking outside of the box - creating new crazes - is a great way to encourage different target groups to get more physically active. Just look at the popularity of Zumba and Aqua Zumba to see how effective this method can be.

What's the number one weakness of the fitness industry?

Being able to retain highly qualified and experienced staff within the field in order to promote and enhance the industry.

What's your favourite life motto?

"Go big or go home!"



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IHRSA awards recognise excellence

• pam o'donnell • ihrsa vice president - member experience

IHRSA's awards programme recognises members of the association for their service to their communities, their customers, and to the improvement of the entire health and fitness industry.

The Julie Main Woman Leader Scholarship and the Outstanding Community Service Award are both given out during IHRSA's annual International Convention & Trade Show.

The first goes to a woman who exemplifies what my friend Julie Main stood for: courage, perseverance, excellence and professionalism. Before she passed away in 2009 after a long battle with breast cancer, Main was the co-owner and president of the West Coast Athletic Clubs in California. She was a former board member and past president of IHRSA, as well as an industry speaker. She created a thriving community organisation – the Cancer Well-fit Program – which has enabled cancer patients to feel better about themselves and cope with cancer through exercise.

Linda Mitchell, a 30-year employee of Newtown Athletic Club in Newtown, Pennsylvania, US, was awarded the scholarship in 2012. Each year, Mitchell oversees the distribution of more

than US\$1m of charitable donations (monies, free memberships, personal training, spa services, fitness equipment and so on) to ensure that the donations are spread across a balanced cross-section of worthy organisations.

The Outstanding Community Service Award is presented to an IHRSA member who has made a long-standing commitment to making a difference in, and beyond, their local community.

Trina Gray, the owner of Bay Athletic Club in Alpena, Michigan, US, was recognised as this year's Outstanding Community Service Award winner for her work with children, a women's shelter and a local assisted living centre.

The largest contribution to the outreach has made in the community is through the club's six-week Corporate Fitness Challenge. Based on the simple truth



Award winners: Trina Gray (above left) and Linda Mitchell (above right)

that 'change is hard, but change together is easier', Bay Athletic Club's Corporate Fitness Challenge has improved the lives of thousands of families, individuals and businesses. The success of the programme extends well beyond the club's community, as Gray has shared it with clubs as far away as Hawaii, Singapore and Sweden.

Health and fitness clubs around the world are making a difference, and IHRSA wants to recognise them. For more information and to apply for either award, please log on to the website at www.ihrsa.org/awards

Ask the experts..... 'Firing' a member

"We have a member/PT client who continually shows up late, cancels workouts at the last minute, and always seems to have something to complain about at the club. It has become increasingly difficult to work with her and we have even received complaints from other members. Is it possible to 'fire' a member?"

"It's very possible, but as with an employee, you should have a process so you are treating members fairly.

"In this case, you might want to start with a PT agreement that outlines the prices, policies/expectations, etc. If you are late for a session, it will be cut short and end at its originally scheduled end time. Sessions not cancelled 24 hours in advance will be charged (either fully or



McBride recommends a PT agreement for clients

half rate). You set the expectations in the beginning, so the client is aware.

When there is an issue, someone (the trainer, fitness director or GM) needs to privately have a conversation

with the client to let them know their behaviour is adversely affecting others. First offence, verbal warning; second, written; third, terminate the membership. Always use common sense and discretion. As a private club, you have to protect the environment of your staff and other members.

Of course you want to ensure staff never make any decisions based on any form of discrimination. However, there are times when you have to tell a member what is acceptable and what is not with regard to their behaviour in the club." *Bill McBride, IHRSA president, and president & COO of Club One, Inc.*

Read more answers to this question at ihrsa.org/industryleader



Pedro Ruiz (pictured with his wife Constance) was honoured for his contribution to the industry

Vivafit CEO receives award

An awards ceremony recognising Spanish and Portuguese business leaders took place in Lisbon on 10 July. Pedro Ruiz, CEO of women-only fitness franchise Vivafit, won the Entrepreneur of the Year 2011 award.

The Portuguese health and fitness association AGAP was present at the event, which was organised by the Luso-Spanish Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCILE).

Prizes awarded by CCILE are given to managers and entrepreneurs who have contributed very significantly to the growth of their professional activity, whether through investment or the

development of their companies. "For the first time, an entrepreneur from the fitness industry was awarded this very prestigious award – totally deserved for the achievements in Portugal and abroad," says AGAP's Armando Moreira.

"The fitness market needs good examples and good practice, and it's an asset to the market to have competitive companies like Vivafit," adds Moreira, noting that the brand already has clubs in Europe, South America and Asia.

Ruiz's wife and Vivafit co-founder Constance Ruiz was also recognised, as were all employees and business partners.

news in brief

Actic divested

FSN Capital LP II has signed an agreement to divest the leading Nordic fitness club chain Actic to funds managed by IK Investment Partners. Closing of the transaction is subject to legal and regulatory approvals.

Founded in Sweden in 1981, Actic (formerly Nautilus Gym) has developed into a leading Nordic fitness club chain with 143 clubs and around 200,000 members in six countries. In 2011, Actic had sales of SEK575m (€69m) and an EBITDA of SEK139m (€16.7m).

Since the investment by FSN Capital LP II in 2007, Actic has seen strong growth in sales and EBITDA, with CAGRs of 14 per cent and 16 per cent respectively. The doubling of EBITDA has been achieved despite significant investments in central operating expenses, and the implementation of large structural changes at both club and central level.



Fitness chain Actic operates 143 clubs across six countries in the Nordic region

Events diary

Visit www.ihrsa.org/calendar

13 September 2012

Innovative Marketing to Grow Your Membership (Webinar)

1-4 November 2012

12th Annual IHRSA European Congress - Vienna, Austria

19-22 November 2012

ChinaFit / IHRSA China Management Forum - Shanghai, China

19-22 March 2013

IHRSA's 32nd Annual International Convention & Trade Show - Las Vegas, Nevada, US

Physical inactivity as bad as smoking

Published in *The Lancet*, a new study shows how big a toll physical inactivity takes on our health, with its impact on mortality comparable to that of smoking.

Researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School found not engaging in moderate exercise for 150 minutes a week was linked with 5.3 million deaths worldwide in 2008 – around 9 per cent of all deaths. "With elimination of physical inactivity, life expectancy of the world's population might be expected to increase by 0.68 years," say researchers.

The researchers analysed past studies and found that not engaging in recommended exercise levels was the main cause of 6-10 per cent of coronary heart disease, breast cancer, colon cancer and type 2 diabetes cases globally.

About IHRSA

Founded in 1981, the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association is the only global trade association, representing more than 10,000 health and fitness facilities and suppliers worldwide.

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

Locate a quality IHRSA club at www.healthclubs.com

IHRSA European Congress 2012

Kristen Walsh previews this event, which takes place in Vienna, Austria, on 1-4 November

Former British Airways executive Shaun Smith will address more than 400 fitness industry executives, managers and suppliers at the 12th annual IHRSA European Congress, which takes place at the Hilton Vienna, Vienna, Austria, on 1-4 November 2012.

Founder and partner of Smith & Co in the UK, Smith is the former head of customer service, sales and marketing training for British Airways. He will speak at the IHRSA European Congress on the topic: **Bold – How to Be Brave in Business and Win.**

seminar sessions

Smith's presentation will be among 14 seminars offered on a variety of topics pertinent to health club operation and management. These will include:

- **Insights on The European Market: Key Drivers, Statistics & Trends** – moderated by Hans Muench, IHRSA Europe director, with panellists Rene Moos, CEO of HealthCity International based in the Netherlands, and Ståle Angel, CEO of Elixia Nordic based in Norway (sponsored by Technogym)
- **Mid-Range Clubs: Finding Your Niche** – presented by Henrik Gockel, owner of Prime Time Fitness GmbH & Co. KG, Germany (sponsored by GANTNER)
- **Member Engagement: Building a Foundation for Increased Retention** – presented by Brian Morris, CEO of Aspria Group, based in the UK
- **Marketing that Works – Effective Campaigns Shared by Industry Leaders** – moderated by Rasmus Ingerslev, CEO of Fresh Fitness in Denmark, with panellists Alan Leach, regional manager



Seminars at the event in Vienna will be translated into German, Spanish, French, Italian and Russian

of Westwood Clubs in Ireland; Christin Kalve, owner of Sport-Treff Health & Spa Club in Norway; and Phil Marsland, group chief marketing officer of Virgin Active Group Ltd, UK

"The seminars will offer practical advice and tips that clubs can use immediately to improve their businesses," says Muench.

All 14 seminars will be simultaneously translated into German, Spanish, French, Italian and Russian.

additional highlights

Additional highlights of the event include:

- One-to-one meetings with a range of leading suppliers in the Sponsor Showcase
- Special seminars offered by Keiser Corporation, Les Mills International, Polar Electro Oy, and Technogym
- A tour of some of Vienna's premier health clubs
- Proximity to many major tourist attractions, with the Congress taking place directly in the city centre, adjacent to the Stadtpark



Ex-BA executive Shaun Smith

"The chance to network with like-minded colleagues is one of the major benefits of the event," says Muench. "Clubs share similar challenges and opportunities – a casual conversation with a fellow club operator could lead to an 'aha!' moment."

Situated on the banks of the Danube, Vienna is one of Europe's top tourist destinations, noted for its architecture, culture, history, and charm.

for more information...

For more information about the event or to register for the 2012 IHRSA European Congress in Vienna, please visit the website at www.ihrsa.org/congress or email intl@ihrsa.org

WITH THANKS TO THE SPONSORS

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A new public health service

David Stalker, CEO of the FIA, reports on July's public health Vanguard focus group, which looked at ways in which the health and fitness industry can play its part in the restructured health service

Health Club Management is the
FIA's Public Affairs Media Partner

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Association

vanguard

The second in a series of public health reform focus groups, for FIA Vanguard members, highlighted the importance of making local connections and having a strong evidence base for exercise interventions.

The focus group, which took place in July – sponsored by Cosmed – looked at the structure of the new Health and Wellbeing Boards, which will co-ordinate public health activity in each local authority as part of the health reforms in England. The group was led by Jo Webber, deputy director of policy at the NHS Confederation – the body representing 95 per cent of all organisations that deliver and commission NHS services.

Public health model

Webber opened the session by explaining that the reforms represent a move towards local determination and a reduction in central control over finances and commissioning of services, with £65bn being handed to GPs and commissioners and £5bn passed to local authorities to deliver on public health.

The new system, which is taking a long time to implement in its entirety, has been designed to be “locally responsive to the needs of communities,” said Webber.

She continued: “Our ageing population is a huge concern; over one million people will soon reach their 100th birthday. The NHS has made significant progress in increasing life expectancy, but the key now lies in reducing the number of years of ill health.”

The 150 Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) will work with the new Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the local authorities (LAs) to decide the priorities for local health spending.

For physical activity providers, it will be impossible to target HWBs collectively as they will all be driven by local priorities, some of which will come from an annual conducted assessment of local health needs and inequalities (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – the JSNA).

Physical activity providers will therefore need to understand each Health and Wellbeing Board's JSNA, and approach them with a business case for an intervention which shows a return on investment, supported by strong, relevant evidence.

The HWBs have statutory membership of at least one local representative. Making contact with local councillors – likely to be these local representatives – could be a good way to build a relationship with the boards, as the councillors will have an interest in the needs of local employers.

Public Health England is the national body sitting above the HWBs, LAs and CCGs. It will shape the national public health marketing strategy – a strategy to which individual marketing strategies might usefully be aligned.

Webber stressed that the new system is all about local relationships and influence – who you know, as well as what you know and whether you can back this up with evidence.

Changing perspectives

The group discussed the fact that exercise referral schemes are not well evidenced, and that their continuing flaw is adherence; a focus on motivational interviewing or physical activity counselling will be key as part of a holistic offering from physical activity providers.

However, Webber cautioned that at this stage, exercise referral and physical activity will not be a priority for many HWBs, as it is not included in statutory legislation or the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). The boards will therefore initially be concerned with a focus on the crisis care end of the spectrum.



Health changes: Fitness leaders have a chance to redefine their role

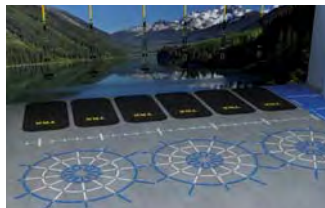
Webber asked FIA members to think about how to get innovation into our offering as exercise providers, to bring the focus back to the preventative end of the scale and suggest new ways to deliver within the restructured health service that will mean costs do not increase.

Ultimately the sector has to take a multi-faceted approach that's based around engaging with Public Health England, HWBs, LAs, CCGs and GPs in order to change their culture and thinking. A similar analogy could be made with the recent smoking ban; this was just the tipping point and came after years of pressure that first started with encouraging GPs themselves to stop smoking.

The value of evidence

The meeting underlined the importance of the nationwide investigation being carried out by the FIA Research Institute. We need to collect a good set of local case studies to be able to influence commissioning groups and present our evidence to Health and Wellbeing Boards. It's a massive undertaking, but will be of significant value to our sector going forward.

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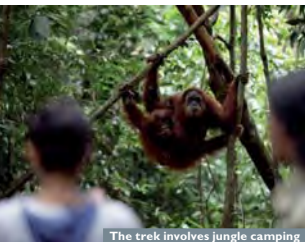


Events will take place in Surrey, Wiltshire and London

THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER 2012 best paw forward

Cancer Research UK is holding three Best Paw Forward events this September – in Laleham Park, Surrey; Marlborough's Savernake Forest, Wiltshire; and Notting Hill, London. The idea of this family- and pet-friendly event is to spend a few hours with like-minded people walking around a beautiful route while raising money for cancer-focused research. Each event is slightly different – in Marlborough, there's a 3- or 5-mile course and entry costs £10 with no set sponsorship limit.

Details: www.cancerresearchuk.org



The trek involves jungle camping

20-30 APRIL 2013 sumatra jungle challenge

This tough challenge is set in the Gunung Leuser National Park in Sumatra, Malaysia – one of the only places in the world where you can still see the Sumatran orang utan in the wild. It involves three to five hours of jungle trekking every day for six days. Along the way participants will track wildlife, meet locals, tube down the rapids of the Bohorok river and visit an orang utan feeding platform. The open charity event requires a £475 deposit.

Details: www.charitychallenge.com

Thrill-seekers will abseil 540ft



14 & 15 SEPT 2012 the city summit abseil

The Stroke Association is looking for up to 200 thrill-seekers to abseil down London's fourth tallest building – The Broadgate Tower – to raise funds for research into how the brain can heal and repair itself after a stroke. The 540ft abseil down the impressive skyscraper, in the city's financial district, is the biggest abseil the charity has organised. Registration costs £25 and minimum sponsorship is £350. Details: www.stroke.org.uk

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SEPTEMBER

18–20 Leisure Industry Week

Venue NEC, Birmingham, UK

Summary

LIW is the UK's largest exhibition for the leisure industry, catering for all sectors of out-of-home leisure and attracting thousands of leisure professionals.

The show spans a range of zones, each offering insight into the latest trends and innovations. Last year's event also saw the launch of a new Education Village, hosting seminars and the IOU independent operators' forum. The members' choice Health Club Awards take place alongside LIW on 18 September (see below).
Web www.liw.co.uk

19–22 SPATEC Fall, North America

Venue The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain, Tucson, US

Summary

A three-day forum of one-to-one meetings between corporate spa owners, directors and design/management companies and leading spa suppliers and vendors.
Web www.mcleaneventsinternational.com

18 | Members' Choice Health Club Awards 2012

Venue Hilton Metropole, Birmingham, UK

Summary

The Health Club Awards are unique in the industry as they are decided purely on ratings from customers. This year, over 37,000 members of clubs and leisure centres across the UK voted for their site. The regional and national winners will be revealed at a glittering black tie event on the first night of LIW, hosted by Mark Durden-Smith.

Details

Starts 7.30pm

Welcome drinks reception

Three-course dinner

Second annual awards ceremony

Exclusive after-party celebration

Everyone welcome –

tickets now on sale at

www.healthclubawards.co.uk

LIW is the biggest leisure show in the UK calendar

19–21 | Health+Fitness Business Expo & Interbike Expo

Venue: Sands Expo & Convention Center, Las Vegas, US

Summary

Running the Health+Fitness Business Expo and the Interbike International Bicycle Expo in adjacent rooms gives attendees an opportunity to interact with suppliers from both areas.
Web www.healthandfitnessbiz.com

26–28 | European Fitness Summit

Venue Hotel Skipper, Barcelona, Spain

Summary

The European Fitness Summit offers suppliers from the fitness, wellness and health industry an opportunity to meet with high-ranking decision-makers in a series of one-to-one meetings.
Web www.european-fitness-summit.com

28 | Exercise Anywhere – Making Walking Work

Venue Heart of England Conference Centre, Coventry, UK

Summary

Organised by Nordic Walking, this event showcases fitness walking programmes. It will include workshops, presentations and a roundtable discussion.
Web www.equity-events.co.uk/nordicwalking

30–3 October | 12th World Leisure Congress

Venue Palacongressi di Rimini, Italy

Summary

Attended by academics, researchers and NGO and government officials, this year's theme is Leisure and Transformation.
Web www.worldleisure.org

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everyone's talking about . . .

taxing sugar

It tastes so good, but our love of all things sweet is having a devastating effect: obesity is killing our nation, and others around the world, both physically and economically. Is it time for a tax on sugar?

The average UK adult now weighs 9kg more than they did a generation ago, and this is contributing to a rising incidence of heart disease and diabetes. With the country fattening up so quickly, do we need some drastic action – a tax on sugar, for example? Is such an immediate impact on people's pockets more likely than education to make them sit up and listen?

Could such a tax be effective in reducing public consumption of fizzy drinks, confectionery and junk food? Or would it simply mean an increase in the cost of living, as staples like bread become more expensive? Perhaps

revenue generated from such a tax could be channelled into the NHS to help it cope with the cost of obesity.

Governments have traditionally been intimidated by the powerful food and beverage industries, yet more are starting to take them on with taxation. Last December, the French government introduced a tax on Pepsi and Coca-Cola, while earlier this year, Denmark brought in a tax on fat.

New York and Richmond, Virginia, are blazing a trail in the US, with proposed taxes on sugar-sweetened drinks. Jeff Ritterman, a member of Richmond City Council who is the driving force behind the proposed tax, says education alone

isn't enough. "As with tobacco and car seatbelts, there needs to be some stick to go with the carrot: after all, sugar is highly addictive," he explains.

A former cardiologist, Ritterman says there's new science to back up his campaign. He says the reason fizzy drinks are so dangerous is that fructose, on its own, can't be metabolised by the liver. Instead it turns it into fat and cholesterol. He even suggests fruit juices will be taxed at some point, as the fibre from the fruit is stripped away, leaving the fructose highly concentrated.

So has the time come for governments to take on the food and beverage industry? We ask the experts.

HAS THE TIME COME TO INTRODUCE A SUGAR TAX? EMAIL US: HEALTHCLUB@LEISUREMEDIA.COM

jeff ritterman

richmond (united states) city council • member



A penny per ounce tax on sugar-sweetened beverages might be the single most effective measure to reverse the obesity epidemic. If Richmond is successful in introducing a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, I think the dominoes will fall rapidly, with other cities following suit and the first law suits against the beverage industry.

Our proposed tax, which goes to a public ballot in November, was prompted by data showing that one-third of our Latino and African-American fifth to seventh graders are obese, with 20 per cent more in each category being overweight. Health-wise, we have a tsunami coming.

Drinks are a good place to start, as the beverages we're taxing have no nutritional value. There's also more scientific data linking these drinks to obesity, type 2 diabetes and coronaries than with baked goods. There have been challenges: Big Soda has opened an office to go against us and I don't think we can win without US\$100,000 to spend. It's a massive challenge, but it's also very simple. If people switch from soda to tap water, they'll save money and become thinner and healthier. The city will also have an extra US\$3m to spend on health interventions."

phillip mills

les mills international • ceo



Taxing bad food isn't the whole answer, but it has an important part to play in slowing the obesity epidemic. With tobacco, a combination of higher taxes, high-profile advertising and social pressure made a huge difference. But it took 50 years to halve the rate of smoking. We don't have that time now.

The simplest way to tax junk food is to tax sugar, which is the key villain. I'd like to see a tax-shifting policy where higher taxes on junk food are offset by lower taxes on fresh fruit and vegetables and healthier foods.

As a fitness industry, our first responsibility is to motivate people to exercise by making our facilities more fun, social and educational. We can educate our members to eat better via social media, newsletters, seminars and direct advice.

As part of our broader contribution to society, we should be lobbying governments not only to tax junk food, but also to create incentives for exercise, to create healthier cities with cycle and walking facilities, and to drive exercise as a part of educational curricula. And one more simple thing: let's get the junk food out of our schools!"



Many experts support the idea of a tax on sugar, but should healthier foods then be subsidised at the same time?

paul sacher

mend • chief research and development officer



“I think this is an interesting concept, but the practicalities are difficult. From a nutritionist’s point of view, I don’t think it’s right to demonise just one type of nutrient. Fat, for example, has twice the calories of sugar.

I think there could be some unintended negative consequences of a sugar tax. For example, making

sweets and chocolate more expensive may just drive up the consumption of crisps. Taxing sugar-sweetened drinks might switch people to fruit juice, as they think this is a healthy choice, but actually fruit juices are very sugary too. We have overweight children coming to our programmes whose parents assume it’s fine to let them drink a litre of fruit juice a day.

I do, however, think there’s an argument to make less healthy products more expensive and use the money to cut the cost of healthy products, to make it cheaper to eat well.

Our experience at MEND shows that more education is desperately needed. This is where the health and fitness industry can help: our new Momena programme is aimed at giving fitness professionals the tools to teach people about nutrition and also to change their behaviour.”

prof terence wilkin

derriford hospital • professor of endocrinology and metabolism



“Tax sugar, and we might eat less. Evidence points to the food industry so manipulating calorie density and portion size that a defenceless population has succumbed by consuming too many calories. Taxation may be the only way out, as calorie-dense foods are inappropriately cheap for many to afford a ‘healthy’ choice.

Ten years ago, when type 2 diabetes was first reported in obese UK children, the knee-jerk reaction was to blame physical inactivity, not processed foods and portion size. In the absence of any real evidence, all that intuitively seemed necessary were more playing fields, more PE time and affordable leisure centres. Evidence, however, is crucial because intuition can be wrong. Research studies consistently show obesity in contemporary children starts before school age, so playing fields and computer games are unlikely to be the cause.

Crucially, physical activity interventions have been shown time and again not to result in weight loss, as children seem to compensate with less activity at other times. If over-nutrition, not under-activity, is the cause of childhood obesity, then a tax on sugar might be a good idea.”

CARL LIEBERT

The president and CEO of US-based 24 Hour Fitness talks to Kate Cracknell about leading his team to change



“**M**oving into the fitness industry six years ago was the first time I had been in a retail environment where I was selling only what people really needed, as opposed to what they wanted,” says Carl Liebert, president and CEO of 24 Hour Fitness.

Liebert started his professional life as a naval officer – “I look back to that experience, at the young age of 22, as invaluable in developing me as a leader” – before family commitments brought him back to his home town of Indiana, where he joined General Electric. “I did a host of jobs, from running manufacturing plants to sales and marketing to selling extended warranties and service plans. It was nine years of very good leadership training at a time when Jack Welch was CEO – an opportunity to learn from someone I believe to be one of the best.

“I loved retail, so I then went to an electronics company, Circuit City. We had 600+ stores around the US and by the time I left I was running around 350 of those, across 22 states, as division president. I then spent three and a half years with Home Depot, leaving as executive vice president, head of stores. At the time we had a little over 2,000 stores and 300,000 employees in the US and Mexico, and were also just starting our growth in Canada and China.

“And then I got one of those phone calls making me an offer I couldn’t refuse, and it came from Ted Forstmann. Forstmann Little & Company had bought 24 Hour Fitness in 2005 as part of a private equity portfolio, and in October 2006 Ted talked me into coming in to run a fitness company.

“In October I will celebrate my sixth year with 24 Hour Fitness, and I genuinely hope I never, ever leave this industry. It’s inspiring, engaging and fun. I’ve spent most of my career in retail, and as I say that sometimes means selling people things they don’t really need – a fourth TV, new windows for their house... What I love about health, wellness and fitness is that we’re selling people something they need and that we want to provide. It’s really easy to be excited to come to work every day.”

Refining the model

Just last month, 24 Hour Fitness was put up for sale by Forstmann Little & Company, with reports suggesting that it could fetch as much as US\$2bn. Liebert explains: “We’ve had 10 straight quarters of year-on-year club growth and have a fantastic year in progress right now. We’ve made sure we have a great company for them to put on the market.”

It’s been a tough few years for health club operators – indeed, for business as a whole. How has 24 Hour Fitness



weathered the storm and emerged as such a strong asset? “Even though member attrition spiked during the recession, as a result of being in the value segment of the market we benefited from people moving out of country club-style memberships and into our clubs. We actually grew membership and earnings throughout the recession,” says Liebert.

“We’re doing some very exciting things across our portfolio as well. In our history we’ve gone through evolutions: we’ve had periods where we’ve built clubs of a certain size, acquired other clubs



Since Liebert (left) joined the company, around 60 new clubs have opened



“WHAT I REALLY LOVE ABOUT HEALTH, WELLNESS AND FITNESS IS THAT WE’RE SELLING PEOPLE SOMETHING THEY NEED”

of a different size, put them together... They’ve performed well, but we’ve now settled on a standardised format for all new clubs: 3,900–4,400sq m (42,000–47,000sq ft) of open plan space. Within that footprint, we create space for functional training – a typical new club has a 280–370sq m (3,000–4,000sq ft) functional zone. There’s also a basketball court, group cycling studio, separate group exercise room, swimming pool and state-of-the-art kids’ club.

“Since I’ve been with the company, we’ve built approximately 60 new clubs

– taking our total to 415 – and they’re performing really, really well. Our old clubs are performing well too, and that’s very important because that’s still where most of our members are – the members who have been with us the longest. It’s important that we continue to invest in those clubs, and we have a number of initiatives underway in terms of remodels and refreshes to create a really great workout experience in all of our clubs.

“It’s all about member satisfaction and we use a JD Power methodology to monitor that, providing external benchmarking on our service and satisfaction scores. Every one of my senior leaders has a JD Power KPI, and we’ve seen our JD Power satisfaction scores climb over the last four years – high single-digit growth year-on-year – and even accelerate this year. I believe that’s a reflection of all

the investment that we’re putting back into our existing fitness clubs.”

A sense of team

24 Hour Fitness has also taken a brave but very positive step towards a non-commission environment, introduced in April 2011. “It’s not that commission sales are bad – we had good satisfaction scores when we had commissioned sales people,” says Liebert. “The dilemma, though, is that some people would prefer to join online or on their mobile device, without talking to a single person. And the more you encourage people to join on their terms, not our terms, the more it puts the sales counsellor in conflict with the member objective.

“We wanted to change things in line with what the customer wanted, but also so our team members – we call them team members, not employees – didn’t ▶

24 Hour has an ongoing programme of club remodels and refreshes to drive customer satisfaction



▶ have to worry about their income. Membership counsellors are now paid an hourly wage and then, if the club hits its membership goals, a team bonus allows everyone to share in the success.

"So for example, a membership counsellor can give a guest a tour but then, if that person wants to go home and join online, that's fine – our prices are all online and there's no pressure to sit down and talk to a sales person. The whole idea is that we're with you, not against you in a negotiation.

"And from our team's perspective, if Wendy for example is off one day and her guest comes in, she doesn't have to worry about someone else stealing her commission. How I describe it is that we've gone from an individual sport, where each team member was playing for the name on the back of the jersey, to a team sport where we're playing for the name on the front of the jersey –

where the individual earns more if the team does well.

"It's had a great impact on our staff retention. When I got here, we had a little over 200 per cent annual turnover of team members. That's now dropped to around 60 per cent, in part down to this sense of team and ability to predict pay cheques. We've also listened to the feedback from our annual team member surveys and have spent the last four years creating better career paths, training and opportunities to ensure we retain our best people.

"When I was in the navy, the first thing I learned was that I would be judged on the success of my people. Were they getting promoted? How much more money were they making year-on-year? Were they being exposed to new opportunities? So when I got to 24 Hour Fitness, I set out to create a really great team of people who would be developed and given the opportunities to succeed. People know

they can get ahead with us, and that's a very big deal. We've had seven district manager promotions this year and all came from club manager positions – I didn't hire a single person externally.

"We coined the phrase early on that you either serve members or you serve those who serve your members. For me, it would be a shallow victory if I got to the top of the mountain and the people on my team weren't with me."

No commission, no long-term contracts

Liebert continues: "Our move away from a commission-based structure has also helped us continue to grow, because members and prospects are starting to see us as very approachable. We've tried to de-complicate fitness, working diligently to ensure we don't intimidate and that we're open and accessible for people, not only in terms of our geography but also in our approach.

"In addition to removing commission in our clubs, we also stepped away from requiring long-term contracts four years ago. We have various packages available, including month-to-month, pre-paid limited term and reduced monthly fees if you pay a higher initiation upfront. Ultimately, we want our members to be able to choose the membership option that best suits their needs.

"And if they want to leave, we treat them with the same respect as when they joined, as we believe they'll come back to us at some point. We have lots of data to ▶

24 HOUR FITNESS – IN BRIEF

- Established in 1983 by Mark Mastrow under the 24 Hour Nautilus brand
- Rebranded to 24 Hour Fitness in 1994
- Acquired by private equity firm Forstmann Little & Company in 2005
- Appointment of Carl Liebert as CEO in 2006
- Estate now encompasses more than 400 clubs across the US, with almost four million members and nearly 22,000 staff (including over 4,000 PTs)
- Average 24 Hour Fitness Super-Sport club membership: 9,500 members
- Average monthly fees at a Super-Sport club: US\$35
- Opening hours vary by location – not always 24/7

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Liebert says customer satisfaction is about getting the basics right – and also ensuring maintenance is a key priority



- ▶ suggest that members don't leave us to go to a competitor – they leave because sometimes life gets in the way and they quit fitness altogether."

Liebert adds: "Consumer satisfaction is also about getting the basics right. Our clubs can take a beating – the larger format clubs, which have up to 23,000 members, can see up to 95,000 workouts a month – and it's important to deal quickly with any maintenance issues. Each of our clubs has a Facebook page, which allows members to give immediate feedback on any concerns they may have, rather than waiting for the JD Power survey.

"Our Facebook pages also help us ensure we're communicating with members in their preferred way."

Recruiting for success

Running such an extensive chain of large clubs presents huge challenges, not least in terms of consistent standards. So what's the secret of 24 Hour Fitness' success? Liebert's answer is the same as many operators give, but in his case there seems to be real weight behind it: "It's our people. It's all about core values, because that's what drives this company.

"That starts with accountability. We also talk about being connected to members and to each other – we have a very good ecosystem that we protect. We challenge ourselves and set high expectations, ensuring that every individual knows how important they are to our success. We have a lot of integrity. We try to have a lot of energy in everything we do. We're

versatile – I believe in change and ensure my team members see that as a positive thing, because companies have to get better every day. And we try to have fun – we're in fitness, and if we can't have fun, who can?"

"We invest a lot of time and effort into recruiting the right people. I always tell my sons that, when they shake someone's hand, they should give a firm handshake and make eye contact. You say 'please' and 'thank you' and, if someone invites you to their house, you write a thank you note. We try to hire people who know those kinds of things – who are conscientious, thoughtful and caring.

"I have to set the tone and I need to be visible – there's a great book called *Workplace 2020* which talks about hiring millennials, and the two things that matter most to them is whether they believe in the product and the company they're going to work for, and whether they believe in the leader.

"However, the club manager is the centre of the universe for our chain, not the CEO or the fitness team. If we don't have the right people in the club, it doesn't really matter what comes out of my mouth. The club manager is responsible for ensuring members have a great experience, and that all the team members are supporting that goal.

"If you have a club of 22,000 members doing 90,000 workouts a month and a team of 30+ personal trainers, that's a big, complex business and you need to recruit the right people. Once we do, we genuinely empower them, and as a result

we're starting to attract military veterans and leaders from other industries."

Continuing the success

So what are the plans for 24 Hour Fitness going forward? "We'll be focusing on our larger format, full-service 24 Hour Fitness Sport and Super-Sport clubs, phasing out our other sub-brands such as Express and Fit-Lite," says Liebert.

"In terms of international expansion, there are some great markets out there that might make sense for us one day – the BRIC markets, for example. However, we're only in 17 states in the US at the moment, so there's still a lot of opportunity here. For now, I'll focus on growing the brand domestically."

More than anything, however, you sense that Liebert's focus is on driving satisfaction among his members and team members, knowing that growth will follow on from these strong foundations. He concludes: "As a result of the various measures we've implemented over the last four years, we're seeing year-on-year improvement across every dimension of the business: member satisfaction, team member turnover, team member satisfaction, new member units, member retention. Change is always hard, but I feel we'll be rewarded in the long term."

 **kate cracknell**
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research round-up

Scientists have discovered a new type of 'beige fat' cell, present in most adults, that they believe has the ability to burn fat

fighting fat

We all know that too much fat is a bad thing. However, studies into different types of fat – specifically those that burn energy rather than store it – suggest there might be new ways to tackle obesity.

White 'bad' fat is the type of fat that stores calories, and excess amounts of it cause people to put on weight. It's found in abundance in obese people.

Brown fat is a type of fat that generates heat but that also burns calories, and it has been linked to helping control weight. Brown fat dwindles with age – indeed, it was believed to be present only in children until researchers in 2009 found that it's also active in up to 7.5 per cent of adults.

But in July 2012, a study in the journal *Cell*⁸ reported the discovery of beige fat – another type of fat present in "most or all human beings" which has the ability to both store and burn calories.

beige – the new brown

The existence of beige fat cells was first suggested in 2008 by Dr Bruce Spiegelman, a cell biologist at Harvard Medical School. But it wasn't until this recent study, conducted by Dr Spiegelman and scientists at Harvard's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, that it's been possible to isolate the cells and determine their genetic profile.

Beige fat cells, the scientists say, can be found in humans in small deposits around the collarbone and spine. In this study, they cloned beige fat cells in mice to look at them more closely.

The scientists discovered that beige fat is similar to brown fat in some ways. Both contain iron, which gives them their distinct colour, and both have an



ZENON / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Irisin, a hormone produced by exercising muscles, may stimulate beige fat cells

abundance of mitochondria – a part of the cell which can produce heat and burn calories.

But there were also some significant differences. Brown fat cells give off high levels of UCPI – a protein that mitochondria need to produce heat and burn calories. In comparison, beige fat cells usually express low levels of UCPI. However, beige fat can be stimulated to produce a lot of UCPI when exposed to irisin, a hormone released by muscles during exercise or when muscles shiver due to exposure to cold temperatures.

It was also found that the cells differ from each other genetically. Brown fat cells originate from muscle stem cells. In comparison, beige fat cells emerge from white fat cells – making it possible for them to store fat when levels of UCPI are low, but burn it when muscles release irisin through exercise.

fighting obesity

The study reports: "The therapeutic potential of both kinds of brown fat cells is clear, as genetic manipulations in mice that create more brown or beige fat have strong anti-obesity and anti-diabetic actions."

It's hoped these discoveries may lead to new treatments for obesity. Indeed, Spiegelman has already set up a biotech company, Ember Therapeutics, in an attempt to develop irisin in drug form to stimulate brown and beige fat cells to increase weight loss.

However, this is still a very new field. While more brown and beige fat cells are found in fit compared to sedentary people, for example, more research is needed to prove the two are directly linked. It's believed that the effects of irisin may only be temporary, but scientists don't know this for sure yet.

⁸Spiegelman, Bruce et al. Beige Adipocytes Are a Distinct Type of Thermogenic Fat Cell in Mouse and Human. *Cell*, p366-376, July 2012

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WORTH **its** WEIGHT

Gyms are responding to the need for more holistic weight-loss programmes, and are reporting great results for their members, says Dawn Tuckwell

Although weight loss is one of the main reasons quoted for joining a gym, health clubs don't have the best track record in helping people to meet these goals. Not only that, but those with significant amounts of weight to lose typically won't join a gym.

"The number of people who want to lose weight exceeds the number of people who want to join gyms to exercise," explains Rob Beale, head of sports, health & fitness at David Lloyd Leisure. Nevertheless, as he explains, this simply represents an untapped market: "Targeting weight loss rather than exercise makes sense. It's just a larger audience to go after."

Yet, as weight loss coach Pete Cohen explains: "Gyms have not traditionally been equipped to help with weight loss. Offering the latest equipment and even devising great programmes isn't enough. Exercise is only part of the answer – successful programmes need to offer emotional support, a sense of community, as well as nutritional advice and a progressive, varied exercise programme."

A change in thinking was required, and the fitness industry seems to have upped its game accordingly: nearly every major chain now offers some form of weight loss programme, not only featuring structured exercise sessions, but also

emphasising the psychological and emotional aspects of weight loss.

FREEDOM LITE

Freedom Lite is an eight-week, small group weight-loss programme consisting of 90-minute weekly sessions. The programme places equal importance on exercise, nutritional, lifestyle and motivational advice. Freedom Lite was developed by Cohen and focuses on behavioural change rather than calorie counting.

Debbie Reed, Freedom Leisure group customer service manager, explains: "The secret to the course's success is tackling all the potential factors that could contribute to carrying extra weight. The course is designed to provide the tools needed to make a change from within, lose the unwanted weight and keep it off."

The first half of each session takes place in a quiet space within the club. In the second half of the session, participants get the chance to participate in a range of group exercise classes – they will try at least five different classes over the duration of the course, including aqua fit, group cycling, aerobics, circuit training and kettlebells.

Course leaders receive intensive training from Cohen on how to deliver advice on nutrition, exercise and how to change and break habits, as well as



SHONNE VAN DEN BERG / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM





Freedom Lite is achieving an average weight loss of 12lbs per person over an eight-week period



▶ ongoing support. The course leader has complete autonomy over the type of exercise completed and bases the session on the group's fitness level, age and exercise preferences.

Sessions are designed to introduce participants to a variety of classes, helping them find something they really enjoy and that they will continue doing after completing the course. Outside of the weekly meetings, participants have access to an online programme that offers one-to-one video coaching with Cohen and nutrition profiles, as well as receiving support from an online community.

To date, more than 20 weight-loss programmes have been delivered: 81 per cent of people completed the programme, achieving an average weight loss of 12lbs per person, and 93 per cent felt that it had met their expectations. "Not only do our customers achieve results, but the social interaction and

support really motivates them to keep going," says Reed.

The scheme is open to all and is offered free to anyone enrolled on a GP referral scheme with a high BMI. Otherwise the course costs £40 for members or £80 for non-members, with the expectation being that the course covers the costs of its delivery.

Long-term, the programme is expected to return a profit by boosting member retention thanks to the fact that, as Reed explains, attendees "not only achieve results but also get to know others".

MOMENTA

The Momena weight management course has been developed by MEND to focus on long-term behaviour change. Designed to be implemented in venues including health clubs and leisure centres, the course runs over 12 weeks, consisting of hour-long weekly meetings in a classroom environment. Sessions take a discussion-



The Nuffield plan spans nine months



Nuffield offers baseline health checks

based approach and focus on the three key areas of mind, exercise and nutrition.

Each group is appointed its own Momena coach, who oversees each session. Coaches complete a three-day training course and are provided with all of the materials required to deliver the sessions. The operator also receives comprehensive marketing materials to help raise awareness of the programme.

The results of pilot projects have been encouraging. "Participants at Carlisle City Council achieved an average weight reduction of 5 per cent," explains Lisa Taylor, Momena project director. "Eighty-seven per cent of those who began the course attended the full 12 weeks and noted significant improvements in body image, quality of life and vitality, as well as increasing their levels of physical activity."

Taylor continues: "Momena should be considered as a member service in the same way that any group exercise class is viewed. The pilot data shows that Momena can be used as a retention tool, as well as a means of positively impacting membership sales and personal training."

The price paid by each participant ranges from £0 to £150, depending on the setting. "We have not limited Momena to a recommended retail price as its applications are so wide-ranging, from a weekly group-based class through to a fully-inclusive personal training package," explains Taylor.

NUFFIELD HEALTH WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The Nuffield Health Weight Management Programme offers tailored one-to-one support, delivered by its team of physiologists. The programme focuses on long-term sustainable changes, as laid ▶

EVERYONE ACTIVE ONLINE WWW.EVERYONEACTIVE.COM

Everyone Active online, winner of the Spark of Innovation Award at this year's FLAME Awards, is to offer a complete weight management package for members and non-members. The programme consists of training plans, workouts, expert advice, support and guidance. Users sign up, paying separately for each plan, and are presented with a range of different activities to try at home or in the gym, each suited to their individual fitness levels. Being web-based, users can access the programme regardless of their location. It also allows Everyone

Active to capitalise on a market away from the gym – those who might not typically have engaged with a health club.



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The **Momenta** weight-loss programme focuses on the three key areas of mind, nutrition and exercise.



- out by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines on tackling the problem of obesity.

Physiologists run a range of baseline tests including body fat, blood pressure and aerobic capacity to help shape the fitness programme. They also analyse factors such as sleep patterns, eating habits and stress levels to better understand if any of these are linked to weight management issues. The nine-month plan then features eight 'touch

point' sessions to help keep people on-track and motivated.

The programme is available to every Nuffield Health member as part of their monthly fees. Progress is reviewed throughout the nine-month period, but each participant must work hard at home and in the office to meet their goals.

Of the 150 people who have completed the full programme to date, the average reduction in body weight is 5.6 per cent, with a 7.1cm reduction

in waist size and 38 per cent increase in aerobic fitness. But the benefits are not just physical: a 29 per cent average relative increase in health-related quality of life was also reported.

DAVID LLOYD LEISURE – LOSE AND SHAPE UP

This 12-week programme takes a 'whole body' approach. Each week consists of one exercise-based session and one educational session, where participants weigh in and receive group support and nutritional advice. In addition, online support offers access to exercise plans, meal planners, recipes and shopping list suggestions.

Every Lose and Shape Up coach attends a two-day REPs-accredited nutrition and exercise course that focuses on shape change and weight loss.

The programme is promoted to new members by the sales team and to existing members by the fitness team. There are anywhere between 10 and 30 members per course, with around 900 members enrolled across the DLL estate. "Many members enrol with the intention to drop a dress size or lose a few pounds, whereas others want to lose a lot more," explains Beale. "The average weight loss is 9lbs over the 12 weeks, and one member has lost an incredible 87lbs over the last two courses."

Members pay £129 for the course, which equates to less than £5 a session. "Clubs run two or three courses a year,

"NOT ONLY DO OUR CUSTOMERS ACHIEVE RESULTS, BUT THE SOCIAL INTERACTION MOTIVATES THEM TO KEEP GOING"

FITBOOK WWW.GETFITBOOK.COM

This fitness and nutrition journal allows physical activity and food intake to be recorded over a 12-week period. Users make a note of their goals, as well as baseline stats such as body fat percentage and circumferences. Fitbook can be used to plan workouts and record each session, as well as servings of each food group and hours of sleep. By physically writing in their own goals and efforts, say its designers, the journal helps to give structure and accountability to exercise and nutrition, thus aiding weight loss efforts. Fitbook can be sold in gyms as a secondary spend initiative for new and existing members.





Those on Nuffield's programme achieve an average 5.6 per cent weight loss

GYMCODES

This iPhone app from health and fitness website www.weightplan.com provides instant gym tuition by scanning QR codes on pieces of fitness equipment.

Centres taking part in the programme need only apply a small label to each piece of gym equipment. When members scan the code, they are presented with targeted exercise options with video guides. Completed workouts are then synced with weightplan.com's online fitness and nutrition site, which calculates nutritional needs and then provides the user with a food tracker and nutrition plans to support their weight loss goals.



and approximately 5,000 participants signed up last year," says Beale. "We plan to double this by the end of 2013."

But profit is not the main motivator, as Beale explains: "Even with 20 participants, the profits from each course are relatively modest. The scheme is seen as a means of helping members to achieve great results, staying longer and referring friends to join David Lloyd Leisure."

XTRAVAGANZA

Xtravaganza is a six-month programme, offered as a bolt-on product for existing clubs – designed to target both new and existing members – or as a standalone franchise for start-up businesses.

The programme consists of mind and body aspects focusing on reducing calorie intake, changing mindsets through simple NLP techniques, adopting a healthy lifestyle and introducing pleasurable exercise. Participants attend 13 classes over six months, in groups of between eight and 15. At home, they listen to short mind-training lessons on CD.

Xtravaganza is being rolled out in the UK, with the first franchises opening this month. In Scandinavia, where the scheme has been operating for 11 years, there have been over 150,000 participants and 180 centres. UK test groups are showing the same patterns of success as in Scandinavia, with dramatic weight loss in the first nine weeks, during which participants typically lose 1–4kg a week, before stabilising their weight.

Xtravaganza health consultants receive a week of training, with full training – including sales and marketing – also available for managers. The franchise fee and training costs £1,500, after which an annual support and licence fee of £1,500 applies. However, it's suggested that membership clubs can charge a premium for Xtravaganza sessions on top of existing membership fees. In Sweden, established franchises may typically have 200 to 500 customers a year.

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THE WAY TO WEIGHT LOSS



Momenta is an adult weight management programme created by MEND for delivery by health, fitness and leisure operators. Strategic director Lisa Taylor explains the Momenta concept, who can deliver it and why she believes the fitness industry can play a significant role in reducing the weight of the nation – while at the same time increasing participation, growing membership and reducing attrition

WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND MOMENTA AND MEND?

I worked for over 20 years in operations, and despite seeing some great ideas, I never found a weight management programme that could be successfully delivered by fitness instructors.

Then I discovered MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition...Do it!) – an international organisation dedicated to reducing overweight and obesity levels in

children and families. When I came across its kids' programmes, I thought: 'Wow, if only these guys could do this for adults.' Rather than sitting back and waiting for that to happen, I left my role as DC Leisure's group fitness director and joined MEND to help create its adult programme.

It's taken almost three years, but I feel we've now developed a world-class programme that can be delivered successfully in the fitness sector.

WHY WAS MOMENTA DEVELOPED?

The evidence regarding the role that exercise plays in weight loss is very clear: while exercise is critical in helping maintain weight, on its own it doesn't help most people lose it. Momenta enables fitness instructors to deliver an effective weight management programme that focuses on nutrition, behaviour change and activity without moving outside of their expertise or scope of practice.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

We've taken the complex science of successful weight management and distilled it into fun, interactive, classroom-based sessions facilitated by a trained Momenta coach (fitness instructor). Participants consider key behaviours around nutrition and activity in everyday life that are proven to lead to long-term weight gain and are educated and supported in changing those behaviours to address energy imbalances. We make accessible the theories underpinning energy deficit, energy density, conscious eating and physical activity, using a simple to understand model that's been developed by our experts in clinical psychology, dietetics and physiology.

HOW DO OPERATORS BENEFIT FROM RUNNING THESE PROGRAMMES?

Not only can Momenta help participants successfully manage their weight, but it can also generate revenue for operators in the following ways:

- **Increased sales:** Our pilots have shown that Momenta can both attract new customers in existing markets and expand customer acquisition in new markets. This includes reaching people who would not normally go to a gym,



Adherence to the group sessions has been as high as 87 per cent



and attracting corporate clients. Out of the 14 non-gym users in one group who completed the programme, 11 took out gym membership and three signed up for personal training.

- **Improved retention:** Momenta increases weekly attendance over the critical first three-month period, as well as getting results. We've seen attendance rates as high as 87 per cent at week 12 in a course that was offered free-of-charge to participants.
- **Funding:** Momenta can attract funding because outcome data can be collected and evaluated in a way that's recognised by commissioners. Operators can show data that confidently demonstrates the difference they are making to the health of their local community. The programme has already been commissioned in Wandsworth, south London, providing adult weight management programmes via NHS referrals.

WHAT ELSE DOES MOMENTA PROVIDE?

Participants' learning is guided by a comprehensive handbook and supported by online tools that help track changes in key behaviours, activity and nutrition. We provide everything that's needed to support coaches and operators too – from manuals and participant learning

“WE’VE TAKEN THE COMPLEX SCIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND DISTILLED IT INTO FUN, INTERACTIVE, CLASSROOM-BASED SESSIONS”

tools to marketing materials, a secure online data portal and 'dial-a-dietician' phone support.

HOW DOES IT WORK OPERATIONALLY?

Momenta fits easily into existing sales and operations processes. It's delivered by staff on-site and is just like putting another class on the timetable. Accessible to customers as soon as they decide they want to lose weight, people simply sign up and start the course the following week, attending until their initial 'getting started' phase is complete.

They are then programmed into existing activities and services to support the critical requirement of being active for the rest of their life.

WHO CAN RUN THE PROGRAMME?

Momenta is designed to be delivered from a variety of settings. It's already being run by a number of operators across the UK and in London, delivered by personal trainers. In Wandsworth, patients are being referred to Momenta by GPs and dietitians, while Carlisle City Council is offering it to employees during their lunch breaks as part of a progressive workplace wellness scheme.

WHO IS IT SUITABLE FOR?

Momenta is for adults (aged 18+) above a healthy weight (BMI 25–40). Over two-thirds of the UK's adult population currently fall into this category.

The Momenta team will be delivering training in the UK in December 2012. Places will be limited, so to find out more please call +44 (0)20 7231 7225 or email momenta@mendcentral.org

HEAD FIRST

Fitness First Middle East has grown from 16 to 32 clubs since April 2011, and the business continues to grow rapidly. Kate Cracknell talks to its management team about its recipe for success



If Fitness First has been getting some negative press in the UK, in the Middle East it has been hitting the headlines for entirely different reasons. The business – which operates as a franchise in the Middle East (see info panel, p50) – is expanding rapidly, opening new clubs on a monthly basis. It's also introduced a brand of creative thinking that's grabbed the attention of the media, with the operator involved in a wide range of highly visible initiatives – everything from sponsorship of local sporting events through to a Michael Jackson *Thriller* dance flashmob at the base of Dubai's Burj Khalifa for members and non-members alike.

"We've made some fundamental shifts away from what the UK was doing," explains COO George Flooks, who joined Fitness First Middle East (FFME) after seven years at Fitness First in the UK. "When Landmark took over the Middle East franchise in late 2010, it wanted Fitness First people to run the business" – indeed, FFME sales and marketing director Mark Botha also spent five years at Fitness First in the UK, prior to stints at Leisure Connection and Premier Training International, before joining FFME. "However, we've set up our model quite differently in terms of the member experience and interaction at a club level."

Flooks and Botha both joined FFME in April 2011, since which time the business has, says Flooks, "implemented significant changes that have led to notable improvements in sales and retention".

He adds: "The key thing we wanted to do was introduce a much higher level of 'touch' throughout the member journey, from the moment you enter the club to

the moment you leave. That includes high visibility of our personnel, whether that's instructors getting members involved in small group training sessions on the gym floor or staff carrying out cleaning rotas – cleanliness carries a high premium in this market, and we have people cleaning the clubs visibly and at all times.

"Meanwhile, our personal trainers are employed by FFME, as opposed to being self-employed as they are in the

UK. We want them to deliver a high level of member experience, and their remuneration is based on delivering a set number of service hours – inductions and group exercise sessions, for example – rather than purely on the hours of PT they conduct."

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Flooks continues: "FFME inductions include a strong drive towards personal training and group exercise. The PTs conducting the inductions are able to start building relationships with members, and our percentage uptake of PT is in the double digits. Meanwhile group exercise

COO George Flooks (below left) and sales and marketing director Mark Botha (below right) both joined FFME in April 2011





The Motor City club (above left and far right) opened in Dubai in May. The Community Clubs (right, and above right) were a strategic acquisition

has always been a significant element for FFME, but over the last 12 months it's gone up from 35 per cent of members participating to 43–45 per cent.

"That combination – a high PT uptake and high levels of group exercise participation – makes your product very strong. Not only does it allow you to grow revenues across other areas of the business besides new membership sales, but it also drives retention, because once again members are getting a higher level of 'touch' in the clubs."

In addition to improving the member experience through higher levels of interaction, have there been any group exercise (GX) innovations that have helped boost participation in this area?

"One of the things we've introduced is a new group exercise programme called Futuro T.U.F.F. – The Ultimate Fitness Firster. It's been designed by our head of GX, Nathan Brown, who's a former world kickboxing champion," says Flocks. "Most people exercise in one direction – running on a treadmill, for example – but T.U.F.F. is based on 360-degree training and is all about, as we call it, 'torching fat'. It's exclusive to FFME and is now the most popular GX class in the Middle East – more popular than Zumba, more popular than BodyPump. Every single T.U.F.F. class is over-subscribed.

"It's great for our PTs too, as they run the T.U.F.F. classes, so they can build relationships with members in the studio as well as on the gym floor.



"We've also introduced some great gym floor small group training sessions, from TRX and ViPR to PurMotion" – the latter is a frame-based system, launched in the Middle East and designed by five-time Olympian Jorge Bonnet, which incorporates add-ons that allow up to 10 people to train at one time.

These sessions all sound fairly hardcore, but FFME also offers more familiar GX sessions in an extensive studio timetable. I mention my visit to Kuwait at the end of last year, where obesity levels were frighteningly high and physical activity levels low – even among some club members, such as the ladies who attended every day to meet friends and sit in the spa. Might group exercise be the 'way in' for non gym-goers?

"For ladies, group exercise is off the chart," says Flocks. "It's similar to what you saw in Kuwait in that, in our ladies-only clubs, 'club' is the operative word. Members will spend four or five hours of the day there, have a coffee and cake with



their friends or staff. But they'll also do lots of classes while they're there, perhaps back-to-back sessions. We honestly can't make our GX studios big enough."

THE 3 ES

Botha takes the baton: "But as you say, we do have a massive crisis here in terms of diabetes: one in three people across the Middle East has it. And four countries in the Middle East are listed among the top 10 fattest countries in the world.

"So education around the importance of nutrition and exercise is a critical component of our success – it's the first of what we call our 'Three Es'. Money is less of a barrier to exercise here – it's simply a matter of education, of explaining to people why they need to be active and eat healthily."

Adds Flocks: "We've just introduced a nutritional programme called Health First. It comprises 13 seminars over 13 weeks, educating people about things like portion size, sugars, proteins and



For cultural reasons, FFME operates ladies-only clubs, such as Marina Mall in Abu Dhabi (above), as well as mixed sex and men-only facilities



► so on. And we've just signed a deal with nutritional products provider AmCan, so members will be able to buy nutritional products and supplements in our clubs."

Botha continues: "We've also partnered with organisations such as the Dubai Sports Council to run a project called Decide, where we go in and talk to doctors and other medical specialists about the benefits of exercise, to encourage them to prescribe it – and in fact, they're starting to get much more vocal about the fact that people should exercise. Doctors here are more likely to refer their patients than UK GPs."

"The second E is engagement, getting involved in the community and creating

our own community within the clubs. We're encouraging our members to get involved in the decision-making process via social media, for example – in less than 12 months, we've gained over 21,500 Facebook fans.

"For us, driving high levels of engagement is vital, as 60 to 65 per cent of new members come from referrals. That's less to do with the immaturity of the market and more to do with the culture out here: people want to exercise with friends, and small group training and the buddy system are very popular.

"And the final E is enlisting – getting people in and started, hand-holding them through the process with three sessions

in the first 21 days. In the UK, most people join a gym from a competitor, or will at least have exercised in the past; and have a decent knowledge base; here they're coming from inactivity, so it can be scary for them."

SEVEN-STAR OFFERING

Another big cultural difference, of course, revolves around gender. "It all depends on the local demographics and we do have some standalone ladies' gyms," says Flook. "However, increasingly our model for new-builds is moving towards one venue with a common reception but two entirely separate gyms. On one side you'll have the ladies gym, on the other side either a mixed gym or men-only."

"Landmark's policy is to think clearly in terms of club layouts, maximising usable space. Our optimum footprint going forward would be about 1,400–1,675sq m (15,000–18,000sq ft), catering for around 2,000 members," adds Botha.

Aside from the gender-based elements, does FFME have separate sub-brands – as with Blue, Platinum and Black Label in the UK – to denote the level of the offering? "We have Platinum clubs and Plus clubs, which are our equivalent of Blue – except that where in the UK Fitness First is probably a three-star offering, in the Middle East we're a six- or seven-star operator across the board," says Flook.

"We also recently acquired four clubs that had been operating under the Haya brand, and which we now call our Community Clubs. These are effectively Platinum Plus. It was a strategic move for us and isn't an area we'll focus on going forward – they're located in upmarket ►

A LANDMARK AGREEMENT

The Landmark Group encompasses a number of mass market lifestyle brands, including restaurant chain Carluccios, Home Centre, Shoe Mart, hypermarket Spar, hotel brand Citymax and spa brand Spaces. The group currently reports an annual turnover of US\$4.7bn and operates across 17 countries.

Landmark acquired the Fitness First Middle East (FFME) franchise from previous owner Al Hokair in late 2010, with the FFME management team now reporting in to the CEO of Landmark's hospitality division. It has ambitions to grow the chain across the region: the franchise agreement

allows for clubs in up to 21 countries in the Middle East and Africa.

And what the FFME management team brings to the table in terms of fitness expertise, Landmark brings in terms of retail experience and regional knowledge. "Obviously the commercials have to add up, but we aim for high footfall, high visibility locations such as shopping malls – and that's where Landmark is exceptionally powerful," says FFME sales and marketing director Mark Botha. "There's over 20 million square feet of retail space across the Middle East, and within that, Landmark owns over 1,300 stores across its various brands. That's a significant presence."

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- ▶ residential areas and all offer pools, tennis and squash courts, kids' clubs, restaurants and so on, and we wouldn't have built those clubs ourselves.

"However, as an acquisition it made sense as the clubs are located in a very strategic catchment. They also allow us to tap into the kids' market – not only within the clubs themselves, but also going into local schools to run outreach programmes. Kids' fitness is something we really wanted to get into, and we've introduced a great kids' swimming programme in our clubs that have pools. However, generally it's been difficult to introduce kids' fitness to our core estate due to health and safety restrictions and so on."

Membership at FFME in the UAE costs around 4,000 dirhams (£700, €890) a year for Plus clubs, 5,000 (£875, €1,110) for Platinum, and 6,000 (£1,050, €1,330) for Platinum Plus. Interestingly FFME has, says Botha "shifted its entire membership base over the last 12 months to be heavily focused around upfront, cash lump sum payments". He

Media attention: FFME's high profile initiatives have included a flashmob event outside Dubai's Burj Khalifa

explains: "The mentality here is 'I didn't use it this month, so I won't pay for it'. The notion of a contract is very foreign – everything's cash and based on usage – so we've had to work within that.

"All the innovation we've been introducing in our clubs has helped warrant that shift in members' minds."

Third-party revenue streams also contribute significantly to FFME's bottom line, says Botha: "Businesses are very commercial out here. They pay a substantial amount of money to advertise their products and services on our TV screens in-club. We've also managed to create a revenue stream out of our tea and coffee: we're not only supplied with the best quality products for free, meaning we can offer complimentary tea and coffee to members, but we're actually paid to do that. And Adidas has signed a

five-year contract with us to kit out our staff with top-of-the-range clothing and trainers, knowing members will ask for advice on what kit they should buy."

INNOVATION & EXPANSION

And so to the Motor City club, Dubai's latest opening – in May – and the project about which Flooks and Botha seem particularly proud. "The club is fantastically designed, with a great diversity of activity options off the gym floor," says Flooks. "In addition to the large gym with freestyle area, we have PurMotion, an open-air studio with a boxing ring and Swing Yoga, and an open-air MyRide group cycling studio. Our PTs are very excited about everything they can do with their clients."

All this, and it's only a Plus club; the facility Flooks and Botha refer to as the flagship is the new Platinum offering that opened in Abu Dhabi Mall last month.

So does FFME have more innovations up its sleeve? "We've already taken GX onto the gym floor via small group training, but now we're taking it to parks as well, running bootcamp sessions for members and non-members," says Botha. "We're also opening a CrossFit studio in one facility – it's in an area with lots of students and we think it's what they're crying out for: We'll build more if it's a success."

And what about expansion as a whole? "We've gone from 16 clubs to 32 since April last year, when George and I joined. We aim to be at 45 by June 2013 and 50 by Christmas next year," says Botha. "The Arab Spring uprisings have perhaps postponed some expansion plans in other territories, but by mid-2014 or 2015, we intend to have 80–100 clubs.

"We have a great opportunity to grow the overall fitness market well beyond its 2 per cent population penetration."



kate cracknell
healthclub@isuremedia.com

FITNESS FIRST MIDDLE EAST – IN NUMBERS

Fitness First Middle East (FFME) is opening clubs so rapidly that it's hard to keep track, but at the time of going to print the portfolio comprised:

- UAE: 23 clubs – three in Abu Dhabi, one in Sharjah, the remainder in Dubai
- Jordan: Three clubs
- Saudi Arabia: Two clubs
- Bahrain: Two clubs
- Qatar: Two clubs (including one opening in September)
- Kuwait: One club (opening in September)

With these figures, the brand currently dominates in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), "although we're preparing for the arrival of competition – we don't just sit back and think we have the markets," says FFME sales and marketing director Mark Botha.

Competition in other Middle Eastern markets varies. "We're learning as we go and Kuwait, for example, is going to be interesting," Botha says. "It's a competitive market and we have plans to open a number of clubs in quick succession."

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Few people join clubs, even fewer get personal trainers, and most PTs don't survive. Does that really sound like a sustainable model? Scott Hopson shares his thoughts



PERSONAL TOUCH

Top-level figures for the fitness industry are very positive. A relatively new market, having only truly established itself in the last 25 years, there has since been a tremendous growth in number of clubs, number of members, revenue and ancillary services such as personal training, food & beverage, spa and semi-private training.

Europe, North America and Asia comprise the real core of the industry, with combined total revenues, clubs and members coming in at US\$66bn, 104,480 and 116,516,000 respectively. The top 10 markets account for 72 per cent of all global health clubs, and 78 per cent of total industry revenue.

IHRSA's *2011 Profiles of Success* report provides detailed information about health club benchmarks and performance. During the third quarter of 2011, the index (results of 17 leading US health and sports club companies, representing a total of 499 facilities) increased 8.4 per

cent as membership dues revenue and non-dues revenue improved by 6.7 per cent and 12.2 per cent respectively.

The third quarter of 2011 marked the sixth consecutive quarter of increased performance for the 17 companies in the index. Furthermore, membership accounts for the participating clubs grew by 6.1 per cent for the quarter.

Given the economic downturn of recent years, this all bodes extremely well for our industry – right? Well that would depend on your role within it – and if you are a personal trainer, the positive growth may not include you.

Let's take a look at the stats for personal trainers in the industry, using the US as an example – although in fact the picture in the UK is increasingly similar.

STATS LAID BARE

In the US, with a population of 313 million people, approximately 50 million are members of the 29,000 clubs available

– thus 15 per cent of the American population join a health club (which does not, of course, mean they actually attend). Of these 50 million members, approximately 6 million try personal training for one or more sessions. This means 15 per cent of all members (in a good club), and a mere 2 per cent of the population, will try or purchase PT. Let's make this clear: 15 in every 100 members, and two in every 100 people, see value in personal training.

Let's dig further. According to IHRSA, 74 per cent of club revenues come from membership dues and fees, and 26 per cent from ancillary services. Of these ancillary services, PT is the key non due-based revenue stream, accounting for 10–15 per cent of total revenues in high-end clubs and 3–11 per cent in others. Among the most commonly offered programmes by clubs, PT comes in at number one, with a whopping 91.5 per cent of clubs offering the service; fitness



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While PTs may be focused on training the human body, they should equally be able to coach the human being to achieve measurable success



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evaluations and step aerobics are second and third respectively.

These statistics should offer great promise for our PTs: a significant percentage of revenue, as well as the most commonly offered programming at health clubs globally. So what's the problem?

Many clubs globally have a PT attrition rate of up to 79 per cent. Of this, 57 per cent of PTs have left within the first six months, with the remaining 22 per cent leaving by the end of year one. Meanwhile, 63 per cent of PTs conduct less than 20 hours of PT a week and spend only 10 per cent of their work time prospecting, as they usually do not get paid for this. A new trainer can take three to four months to start generating US\$4,500 gross monthly revenue.

So in short, you are highly likely to leave this job or lose it, will struggle financially for the first three or four months, and if you do survive the dreaded six-month mark, you will still be only a part-time PT.

To get new business, prospecting is the most crucial skill, closely followed by referrals – yet you will dedicate only 10 per cent of your time to this. And let's not forget that only 12.5 per cent of all members and 2 per cent of people will be interested in your services (in contrast, 44 per cent of members use group exercise). So in fact you need to prospect an awful lot to make your numbers.

REDEFINING PT

These facts could lead to a very negative view of personal training. Alternatively it could encourage us to change our lens, re-creating the role of the PT and redefining his/her value to the industry.

The reasons for low usage of personal training are very complex, and I do not wish to do injustice to the problem by dumbing it down and over-simplifying. I will, however, look at the necessity to move beyond personal training and into world-class coaching: to create

not just training results but rather transformational experiences that bring true and lasting value to our PTs' offering.

The PTs of the past have been concerned greatly with training the human body: movement, function and programming. We've seen a 300 per cent increase in professional fitness education over the past decade. We've moved into the deep exploration of science of the human body and training. We know more about human form and function today than we ever have. Yet along the way, we have forgotten the most important fact that should inform our very purpose: that inside that human body resides a human being. And that changes everything.

People do not buy training. Period. If a pill existed to create their desired outcomes, they would take it. In fact, no-one buys weight loss, lean body mass, sports conditioning, nor any other result. We know that people are only after the 'what' (goal) as a means to achieve their

Many PTs reject the notion of being sales people, yet this skill can be key to business success



PETERVA TILGOLD / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

“PROFESSIONALS MUST BE DEVELOPED IN THE MINDSET AND SKILLSETS TO COACH PEOPLE – NOT JUST TRAIN THEM”

- ▶ ‘why’ (how it subjectively and measurably changes the quality of their lives).

There’s no actual obligation to lose weight for that wedding in six weeks, for example: no-one has ever been removed from a wedding for exceeding the maximum weight limit. What we seek is the attainment of feelings that we believe will follow as a result of the weight loss – self-confidence, attraction etc – or indeed the avoidance of feelings that we believe would descend on us should we not lose the weight, such as rejection, etc.

To this point – no-one buys training. They are hoping for a transformational experience. They want to live a better version of their lives and are willing to pay for that, if, and only if, you are able to help navigate the path for them.

NAVIGATING THE PATH

If most human communication is not what we say but rather how we say it and what we look like saying it, then it’s very clear why people do not see value in PTs. Until we’re as concerned with the human being as with the human body, we will not add much value to people’s lives.

Helping others to crystallise a vision of who they are and who they want to be, where they are and where they want to go – and then directing all our resources and capacities toward that end – is no

more to do with the perfect execution of an exercise than it is to do with the perfect diet. These are just two tools at our disposal to help people towards their higher purpose. Our professionals must be developed in the mindset and skillsets to coach people – not merely train them.

BUSINESS SKILLS

Yet we can see from the statistics that even those who may have such skills might not survive the financial realities of our industry. As much as personal trainers need to focus on and refine their programme design and delivery, so too must they develop their business design.

There are five key pillars to creating revenue for coaches (PTs) in a fitness club: client induction, client prospecting, client retention, referrals and group training. These are the basics, and essential to surviving and thriving in the industry.

However, delivering on all five elements requires coaches to apply communication skills that enhance both their training offering and the delivery of their business plan. Indeed, our coaches of the future must have the requisite skillsets in gaining, training and retaining clientele from a business perspective as much as from a training one. Yes, this means selling.

Selling is no more than helping other people to make decisions, yet fitness

professionals usually detest and reject all notion of being sales people. This is a failure of both systemic and cultural proportion: we do not systematically develop business skills in our PT courses, nor do we place critical importance on them on the rare occasion they are in the curricula. Having a generic module or two pop up at the end of a long PT course is woefully inadequate.

A move in the right direction would be to permeate every step of our exercise science qualifications with elements of business and behavioural sciences.

PT OF THE FUTURE

As fascinating as the human body and training are, we’ll cease to be a profession until we become professional.

We must also start selling goods that people perceive as having real value in their lives – and based on the stats today, this is not PT in its current guise. What people are willing to buy – from the PTs who know how to sell it to them – is a transformational experience they feel makes their life better.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Scott Hopson is co-founder and VP for PTA Global, the global company for fitness professional development.
Email: scotth@ptaglobal.com
Web: www.ptaglobal.com (global) / www.ptaglobal.co.uk (UK)
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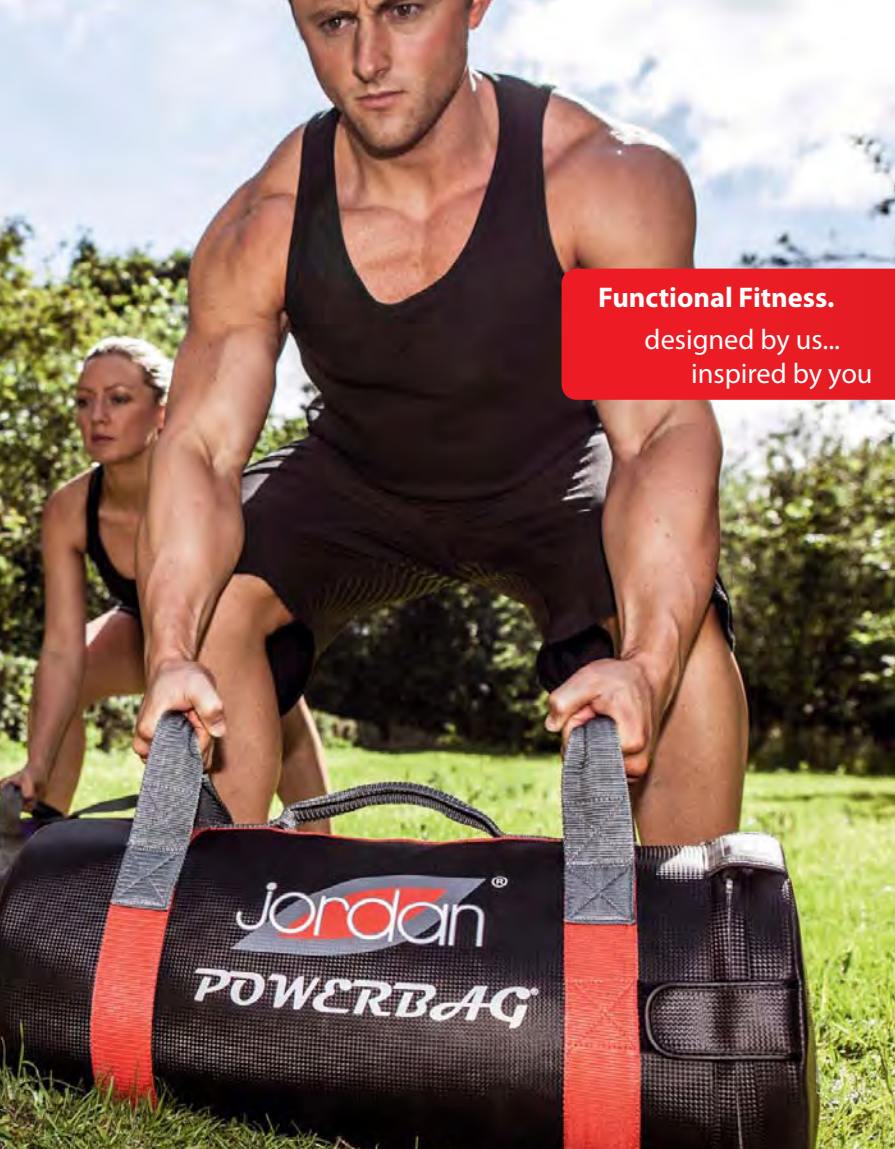


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STRENGTH in NUMBERS

Buying a franchise can make the dream of owning a health club a reality.

what is the investment needed, and what are the pitfalls and payoffs?

Kath Hudson speaks to some who have taken the plunge

NIK DAVIES

Funky Pump Fitness,
Wales, UK



Last year I was supplementing my PT income by taxi driving. This year I'm earning £1,000 a week.

After leaving the Royal Navy seven years ago, I trained as a personal trainer – I'd always been interested in health and fitness. Initially it went well, but then I started finding it hard to maintain the client base. Other local PTs were finding the same. Basically, the problem was

that a new Funky Pump Fitness club had opened, and everyone was going there because it was cheaper and effective.

Funky Pump takes place in a darkened room where DJs provide the music – it's a mix of aerobics, circuits, boxercise and dance, but with all the movements working on the core.

I made myself known to the owners and when the opportunity for a franchise came up last August, I jumped at it. The upfront investment was £9,000 – an educated gamble as I'd seen how successful the model was. The worrying thing was that I had no business acumen whatsoever, but Jason Hole, founder of Funky Pump, gives me excellent support.

He helped me set up my first location at Carmarthen University – which has meant a constant flow of clients – and gave me the confidence to keep going when the first class only had 20 people. Within three weeks we were up to capacity: 85 people.

Now we meet up at least once a week to chat about new moves, marketing ideas or music, and I can go to them with any business queries.

Going forward, I want to get two more venues: Tenby is on the hit list. Also, I'm starting a bridal bootcamp with a wedding dress shop. They suggested it, as they had noticed how much weight their brides were losing between fittings due to Funky Pump Fitness!



Funky Pump classes take place in a darkened room with DJ music



With Fit4Less, Newall was happy he was buying a tested business model

ANDREW NEWALL

Fit4Less,
London, UK



The idea of opening a low-cost gym came to me in 2009, when I was working out at a gym in Notting Hill. I realised I was paying £140 a month just to lift weights and thought there must be a cheaper way.

I had recently sold a backpacker business I owned in Canada and had moved to the UK, so was looking for a business opportunity. Other than

being a gym-goer, I had no background in health and fitness, so I did a basic fitness qualification and lots of research, including job interviews to see how managers interviewed.

I considered a few franchises, but Fit4Less by *énergie* really appealed because I liked the budget concept. A Fit4Less franchise costs £20,000 – I bought four and opened my first gym in 2010.

I did the *énergie* management course and they helped me enormously with the set-up, business plan, forecasts, finding a site and securing the finance, including getting a government loan to help new businesses. Without their help I would never have known about this.

Although the franchisor is extremely helpful – they've made the mistakes so I don't have to – I also find the network of franchisees invaluable. It's great to speak to other owners about day-to-day issues.

The biggest challenge has been that the club has been more popular than I imagined, which has led to more wear and tear issues than I was expecting. However, I'm now at the point where the gym is almost running itself and I'm looking for more sites to expand. The property market in London is making this difficult though, and I keep getting outbid.

I definitely feel I made the right choice. It has helped me achieve many of my ambitions, including buying a sports car!

JAMIE CARTWRIGHT

Xtravaganza,
Sheffield, UK



I created the first Ladyzone gym in 2006, in Sheffield, and now run five clubs across the country, with two more franchised out. As an owner-operator, I'm always looking for ways to diversify my business. I was therefore immediately interested when Xtravaganza contacted me with its bolt-on franchise, which offers dietary support. I believe we do gym very well, but historically we've struggled with diet, so this will be an exciting new offering and will create a further revenue stream for our clubs.

After completing the week-long training course, I'm now in the process

of implementing the concept at the clubs. It's been a simple process, and Xtravaganza offers support by phone and email, free-of-charge refresher training and documentation on the intranet.

I was impressed with the Xtravaganza diet programme, which takes an holistic approach, working to change behaviour rather than just relying on willpower. There's a big emphasis on giving people the tools to make the right decisions, discussion about the motives for eating, and how to stay focused during times of temptation, such as meals out.

Xtravaganza charges £1,500 a year for the franchise fee. That will, I think, very quickly pay for itself as we'll charge members extra to embark on the programme. We already have a database of people interested in weight loss, so I envisage it will be an easy sell. I think it will also help us retain members –

people like to see results, and this will help them achieve those results quicker.

So many people try to embark on the right path, but fail, so I'm always looking for ways to help people reach their goals. ▶



Xtravaganza is a diet franchise for clubs

WES HODGSON

World Gym
International,
Ontario, Canada



Rebranding his fitness facility into a World Gym has greatly boosted profits, says Hodgson



I took on the World Gym International franchise two years ago and am now working on opening my third fitness club, as well as being the master franchisor for Canada.

I already ran one gym – a family business that started in the 1970s – and a couple of years ago we looked at rebranding. The more we got into it, the more apparent it became that everything we wanted already existed in the World Gym International brand. It has loads of brand equity and history and was a good fit for our gym.

The change did concern some existing members, but we spent time explaining the benefits to them and transformed the club into a nightclub for a launch party. It was very Hollywood and lots of fun.

As a World Gym club, we're always bringing benefits to our members: for example, we have more buying power now, so we invest more regularly in equipment. Members also have access to other clubs in the World Gym chain.

The initial franchise fee is US\$25,000, but there's a 50 per cent discount if you're an existing gym converting to the

brand. Our rebrand has boosted our bottom line hugely: we've grown from 3,000 members in one club to 10,000 across two sites. Just hanging the World Gym International sign above the door attracts so many more people. But also, after being an independent operator,

it's great to have access to the owners' network to share ideas.

My aim is to be running six to 10 clubs within the next five years. I also want to be strategic about getting the brand into all the key cities across Canada through other franchisees.

Just hanging the World Gym International sign above the door attracts so many more people

ALLISTER BEAUCHAMP

Snap Fitness,
Orleans, Canada



Five years ago, I never would have thought I would own a business, let alone two and be looking to open a third. I was bored with my job and looking to find something I could be passionate about.

Around this time, I also had a change in lifestyle and lost 70lbs through eating better and exercising. That got me thinking about potential franchise business opportunities that would help improve the quality of life for others. I looked into a variety of options, including restaurants and speciality food stores, but in the end decided on health clubs.

I chose Snap Fitness because I was attracted to the 24/7 aspect of the offering, allowing members to work out



Snap Fitness is a 24-hour gym model

whenever it's most convenient for them. I also liked the intimate size of the gym.

The total cost per health club was approximately CAN\$200,000,

(£130,000), and the biggest challenge was learning about a totally new area of business for me.

The support from the Snap team really made the difference early on, as I experienced an influx of competition not long after opening and relied on the corporate head office for guidance. They offered marketing ideas and strategies, and have an in-house design team to create customised advertising.

I like the freedom and flexibility that comes from owning my own business. I'm very involved in the day-to-day operations of the club, but also enjoy being able to decide how hands-on I want to be. Plus I love the fulfillment that comes from helping others reach their fitness goals, just like I did.

Snap Fitness franchises are now available in the UK, with the first sites open in Sittingbourne and Milton Keynes.



kath hudson
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

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WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR DISABILITY FITNESS PROVISION?
KATE CRACKNELL ASKS A PANEL OF INDUSTRY EXPERTS FOR THEIR THOUGHTS



JULES TWELLS
IFI PROJECT OFFICER,
ENGLISH FEDERATION
OF DISABILITY SPORT
(EFDS)

The IFI was set up to break down many of the barriers that exist for disabled people to participate in physical activity and create a cultural change within leisure facilities. Now managed by the EFDS, the IFI has 400 IFI Mark accredited facilities. Alongside physical access to buildings, IFI Mark centres provide a wide range of inclusive fitness

equipment, appropriate operational policies and procedures, and trained staff who are confident and competent in delivering excellent customer service to disabled people.

We continue to accredit new centres, consolidating our work by making sure facility and equipment standards remain up-to-date, are technically valid and represent reasonable adjustments for disabled people and the fitness industry.

Now that this vital infrastructure is in place, we believe that future direction should focus on improved engagement with disabled people. Greater insight into the psychological barriers to participation and techniques for influencing behaviour change should be the next step.

Real opportunities exist for the fitness industry to understand motivations to exercise and to connect with this target market by offering a range of pathways into sport and fitness activities. However, this will require a cultural shift in both disabled people's perceptions and the attitudes of others.

The IFI's new 'Let's Get PhysicAll' campaign offers positive promotional messages and imagery with which to begin this journey. Our industry needs to play its part in empowering disabled people to make informed, balanced lifestyle choices and seize the opportunities to provide environments that will help them lead healthier lives.



BOB WHITLOCK
SALES DIRECTOR,
SCIFIT (UK) LTD

The development and provision of the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) may be viewed as an evolution rather than a revolution.

To most people – correctly or otherwise – the Stage 2 accreditation appears to have reached its 'inclusive optimum', addressing the main issues of the relevant users' requirements. With this goal achieved, it may be suggested that the IFI's role going forward is: to educate operators and relevant authorities in the application and moral responsibility of offering inclusive products and continued accessibility; to increase the number of accredited facilities; and to gradually update and fine-tune the current 'adequate' level of inclusivity (Stage 2) in order to maintain

traction and conformity. These key next steps would offer stability for the foreseeable future.

It also makes sense that suppliers endeavour to develop their products as inclusively as is viable from the early development stages. This will help avoid excessive redevelopment costs to meet future IFI criteria – and the distinction between inclusive

and mainstream products may also, eventually, merge seamlessly.

The IFI's position and cause will have longevity, in one guise or other. Pivotal to this is maintaining the existing practice of consultation, review and compromise between suppliers and the IFI. This will hopefully secure a sound foundation to a forward-thinking, inclusive/mainstream equipment pool.





ROB THURSTON
COMMERCIAL
DIRECTOR, CYBEX
INTERNATIONAL UK

One of the biggest challenges currently facing operators, and consequently equipment manufacturers, is the lack of funds available for both local authority-run centres and private clubs to assist in the provision of inclusive fitness facilities.

There's also a need to address the misconceptions of what 'inclusive fitness' encompasses. It's not just about disability. In fact, the IFI's own standards highlight significant applications to other markets that the fitness industry also targets – the ageing population and obesity and ill health in both adults and children, for example. A more co-ordinated policy approach to dealing with other health-related issues is therefore required, integrating inclusive fitness into initiatives targeting these important audiences.

For a number of years, CYBEX has offered a full range of equipment certified to IFI level 2, and many of our customers already recognise the advantages of offering inclusive kit. The



Inclusivity should not only embrace disability, but also the ageing population and obese people

City of York Council's Energise leisure centre, for example – the first operation in the UK to be awarded the Inclusive Fitness Mark – is now in the process of almost doubling the size of its facility as the gym strives to meet the demands of a growing membership.



There's always likely to be an increased cost when providing inclusive equipment, but from working closely with the IFI, we've been able to incorporate such requirements directly into our R&D rather than having to modify our existing fitness equipment.

“THE FIRST OPERATION TO BE AWARDED THE INCLUSIVE FITNESS MARK IS IN THE PROCESS OF ALMOST DOUBLING ITS SIZE”



DENISE PAGE
HEAD OF YMCAFIT

Disabled people have the same wants and needs as non-disabled people. They want to be in a position where they can take responsibility for their health, and they want to have genuine choice – whether that's using the gym or taking part in group exercise. They need access to an environment where staff are committed to listening to what they can do, not what they can't, and helping to find solutions.

Until now, the only relevant staff qualification was in gym instruction. But with the support of SkillsActive, the Awarding Organisations and the commitment of YMCAFit, the qualification is now generic: instructors incorporate the theory of working with disabled clients to their own area of expertise.

The course is also open to Level 2 instructors – the prerequisite was



Disabled instructors often show greater empathy to clients, says Page

previously Level 3 PT and Advanced Gym Instructor – and takes only two days plus a half-day assessment. Operators must now commit to training their staff and offering a more accessible timetable; for the first time, it will be possible to highlight on a class timetable those sessions where a disabled client can participate alongside non-disabled users.

Employing disabled instructors is another way to show that the facility

is truly inclusive. We've found that students on YMCAFit's InstructAbility course – instructor training for disabled students – have shown greater levels of empathy, and their ability to motivate people in achieving goals is more advanced than many of our non-disabled students.

Marketing must also be more inclusive to show that everyone is welcome within our facilities.

**“DISABLED PEOPLE
ARE STATISTICALLY
MORE LOYAL TO
BUSINESSES THAT
MEET THEIR
REQUIREMENTS”**



GAR HOLOHAN
CHAIR, AURA
SPORT & LEISURE
MANAGEMENT

Disability is becoming increasingly visible within business, not as a worthy charitable cause but as a core area of business strategy.

Many businesses are creating barriers for a huge proportion of the population to do business with them. In recent years, 82 per cent of customers with disabilities in the UK took their business to a more accessible competitor, while 58 per cent of customers with disabilities say the way they are treated affects the purchasing decisions of friends and families. Do the maths – if around 18 per cent of the population in the UK is disabled, and you multiply this by a factor of three to allow for friends and family, then over half the population are affected in some way by disability. What business can afford to lose out on such a large market sector?

People with disabilities are also statistically more loyal to businesses that meet their requirements than people from other demographics.

However, disability is too often represented in terms of need, pity, incapacity, dependency and negativity. Such a mindset has contributed to the alienation, exclusion and discrimination of people with disabilities from all aspects of life, with consequent loss of business opportunities. Coupled with this negative representation, the stick approach of litigation has meant that positive lasting change and economic empowerment has been difficult to achieve.

When most people think about barriers for people with disabilities, they think of the physical environment. However, the biggest barrier is only 15cm wide and it's what lies between our ears: our attitude. People will forgive you for not having an accessible building if you show you care and are doing your best.



CRAIG SWYER
PRODUCT
MANAGER,
TECHNOGYM UK

The key to getting disabled people engaged in fitness is investment at all levels, to support education and awareness campaigns, as well as initiatives to expand nationally.

The support the London 2012 Paralympics has received from partners such as Channel 4 and Sainsbury's has been a huge step in the right direction, driving high levels of awareness and offering an opportunity to change perceptions about disability.

Going forward, we need much more collaboration between all parties. Technogym already attends IFI workshop meetings with all suppliers throughout the year, but a more collaborative approach – including operators, fitness professionals, equipment providers and training providers – must focus on what we can achieve together, tackling all the challenges effectively.

In terms of equipment, the move to more functional-based products means operators can invest in kit that's suitable for all. I recently visited Hereford Leisure Pool (Halo Leisure)

to see a great example of how functional products such as Kinesis Stations are used with disabled and GP referral clients. We now need to see a widening of the IFI-accredited product criteria to reflect this move towards more functional and cable-based training products.

However, inclusive equipment is already available. The biggest area of challenge going forward will be securing the investment and assistance needed to support health and fitness operators in the areas of education, training and support.



Paralympian Sophia Warner: Focus on Paralympics is driving awareness



KEVIN YATES
HEAD OF
RETENTION AND
MARKETING, LEISURE
CONNECTION

Operators need to stop thinking that inclusive fitness means big yellow lines around their gym floor, or that they only need to invest in equipment and IFI accreditation. In fact, disabled people don't want to be treated differently – they want to feel included. With this in mind, we've invested considerable resources in training our personnel right across the country so they're equipped to provide activities that disabled and able-bodied people can enjoy together.

There has been a rise in awareness of adult disability in sport, but people with disabilities can often still be overlooked.

We need to work in partnership with disabled organisations such as WheelPower, the national charity for wheelchair sport, to address ignorance among operators; it's vital that service providers train their staff to understand and work with disabled users.

At present, I believe there's far too much emphasis on static gym equipment. From our experience of working with more than 2,500 disabled people at the Stoke Mandeville Stadium, we understand that disabled people can use – and want to use – the same equipment as other gym users. Demands from the consumer should guide new equipment development, and it's our responsibility as operators to work with disabled organisations such as WheelPower and the IFI to drive policy and ensure that this happens.



kate cracknell
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MOVING FITNESS FORWARD



Murray Rudkin

So much more than just an equipment provider, Life Fitness has been offering full-service fitness solutions to health and sport facilities across the globe for more than 40 years, and is world-renowned for its quality and innovation. 2012 sees the company enjoying one of the most prolific periods of new product development in its history. We talk to Murray Rudkin, managing director of Life Fitness UK, about the latest state-of-the-art equipment and the company's plans for the remainder of 2012 and beyond

WHY ARE YOU LAUNCHING SO MANY NEW FITNESS PRODUCTS THIS YEAR?

Producing high-quality, innovative equipment has always been at the heart of our business. It's what we do best. But we don't just churn out new products that are here today and gone tomorrow. During times of financial uncertainty, it's important that businesses like ourselves invest in the right areas and keep moving to stay ahead of the game.

So we listened to customers' needs, delved into trends and got under the skin of what end users wanted. The answer was innovative, high-quality products that give facility owners a competitive edge.

Our research and development teams in the US are second to none and are brilliant at integrating technological advancements into our products – and the latest ranges are no exception.

WHAT ARE THE KEY NEW PRODUCTS?

The new Life Fitness Forward collection consists of four really unique pieces of equipment – designed in the flexible, multi-functional, innovative and connected ways that people want in today's exercise regimes.

Life Fitness SYNRGY360 is a total-body, modular training system that is completely ground-breaking. We now have our own

premium performance group cycling bike, the Lifecycle GX, and have introduced the Life Fitness Hammer Strength HD Elite – our most durable strength rack line to date. Lifescape is a high-tech innovation that makes cardio experience interactive, with high-definition virtual hikes, runs and bike rides through famous locations around the world.

In addition, we've launched the Activate Series – a new, streamlined collection of cardio equipment featuring a variety of efficient and effective workouts.

Our entire product portfolio has been designed with support from the world's most advanced in-house biomechanics team, which studies body movement and how it interacts with a machine to deliver the best equipment and the best results.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT SYNRGY360 AND HOW IT CAN BE USED IN FITNESS TRAINING?

The industry is constantly adapting and we embrace this change. As we're a global company, we're quick to observe the fitness trends that are emerging worldwide. One of the major developments is the desire for equipment that does more than one thing. Space is at a premium for most gyms, so we designed a product that synergistically combines lots of different disciplines in one machine.

SYNRGY360's capabilities are endless. It includes functional fitness, strength, exercise and weight loss, core, bootcamp and sport-specific training. It supports exercisers of all fitness levels in accomplishing a wide variety of training goals, including metabolic weight loss and improved balance, co-ordination, speed, agility, flexibility, power and strength. It's a serious bit of kit that's really fun and engaging to use at every level.



The Lifecycle GX has a rear flywheel design and offers a results-driven experience



Lifecycle GX – the premium performance group cycling bike



Demonstrators using the SYNRGY360 at FIBO 2012



SYNRGY360 includes functional fitness for sport-specific training



Hammer Strength HD Elite is custom-made for coaches

WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT THE NEW HAMMER STRENGTH HD ELITE?

We worked with elite coaches and strength professionals to develop the new Hammer Strength HD Elite. It's designed for the toughest training programmes and has custom-made options for coaches. The modular line of racks is strong, durable, safe and includes 38 options and accessories – such as the Power Pivot attachment which locks Olympic bars into place for rotation exercises, plus adjustable band pegs and nine pull-up bar options. There is also a Sumo Base option that gives taller athletes more room to perform.

Put simply, the Hammer Strength HD Elite is our best performance strength rack, designed for extreme training conditions, and the perfect addition to our renowned Hammer Strength brand.

WHY HAS LIFE FITNESS DECIDED TO ADD A GROUP EXERCISE BIKE TO ITS RANGE?

Life Fitness launched the first computerised stationary bicycle more than 40 years ago. It makes perfect sense for us to be able to offer a best-in-class

bike for group cycling – one of today's most popular fitness activities.

The Life Fitness Lifecycle GX has a whole host of hi-tech features. These features include a rear flywheel design, an advanced computer option and an optimal viewing position. The Lifecycle GX coating is also state-of-the-art, protecting the bike from sweat damage.

It's been designed entirely with the end user in mind and gives instructors and class participants an engaging and results-driven riding experience.

WHAT OTHER SOLUTIONS HAS LIFE FITNESS BEEN WORKING ON THIS YEAR?

We'll continue to build on the success of our Solutions Partners offering. This will enable us to utilise the expertise from other related industries to offer bespoke business packages to our customers.

As always, our commitment to training is a key part of everything we do and we're constantly improving the Life Fitness Academy. In fact, we're really proud to be one of the first equipment companies to have been granted a licence from SkillsActive. This means that we can deliver accredited CPD courses and

workshops to our customers, as well as creating them ourselves.

We're also currently gearing up for this year's LIW exhibition at Birmingham's NEC in September, where we'll be showcasing our most recent innovations – so please make sure you pop along to our stand.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR LIFE FITNESS?

Commitment to helping people live healthier lives means always looking at what's trending next. We're currently at an unprecedented moment in time, with exerciser interest and engagement at an all-time high.

The excitement around the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games has resulted in more people, from many walks of life, becoming interested in sport. It's now down to the fitness industry to make it fun and accessible to these people and keep the momentum going.

Meanwhile, we'll continue to forge the way with innovative, forward-thinking, industry-changing products. Our trend-led equipment and solutions are not only relevant for today's market, but are also helping shape the future.

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KitLock digital locks installed at Champneys

CodeLocks has replaced the key-operated locks at Champneys Health Spas with KitLock digital cabinet locks. Guests enter a four-digit code to secure their belongings in the changing room lockers. They can then go and use the spa without needing to carry a key in their robe pocket. In locker-mode, KitLock operates with a single-use code setting. The guest enters a four-digit code to lock and unlock the locker once and then it is erased. The locker then remains open until another guest uses it again.



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
codelocks



fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS
safe space

Safe Space Lockers' 3D video fly-through

Safe Space Lockers will launch its new 3D video fly-through service at LIW 2012. The service allows clients to watch a 3D video showing a "fly" through the changing room design layout, as part of a 3D rendering interior design tool service. This enables the clients to visualise the changing rooms before committing to the build. The new service will be showcased at LIW alongside other Safe Space products including lockers, washrooms, cubicles, padlocks, service and account management. Health centres to have used the 3D rendering service include OneGym Fitness in Bishop Auckland.

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SUPPLIER SHOWCASE

WE PROFILE RECENT PROJECTS FROM DALESAUNA AND TECHNOGYM

AFFORDABLE LUXURY

Client: St Albans City and District Council

Supplier: Dalesauna

The new Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre in St Albans, Hertfordshire, is designed not only to improve leisure facilities for local residents, but also to attract visitors from outside the area to help contribute to the economic regeneration and sustainability of the city's tourism market.

Due to open this autumn, the centre will replace the existing adjacent leisure facility. In addition to a wide range of health and fitness facilities, the development will offer a full-scale spa.

Dalesauna has been involved with the project since 2010, working closely with both the architects and the main contractor to create a spa which features the scale of facilities and quality of finishes more traditionally found in the private sector.

Located on the ground floor of the building, the design of the split-level spa centres on the Roman concepts of bathing, where guests move through a series of heated rooms of varying temperatures. These include the caldarium, a tiled room with benches heated to a mild temperature that's cooler than a traditional sauna, and which leads into the hotter laconium.

The design also features a large kelo sauna with a capacity for up to 20 people, constructed from the prized kelo wood from which traditional Finnish saunas are made. There's also a larger than average aroma steam room, which can seat 15 guests and in which scented oils such as eucalyptus or lavender are infused into the steam.

The new spa will offer a tepidarium – a heated seating area where guests can relax in between other experiences, and which includes two monsoon showers as well as a bucket



The tepidarium has a heated seating area for relaxation

shower, a walk-in hydro spa pool and a relaxation area with heated loungers that opens onto an external sun terrace. Fully accessible for people with disabilities, the spa also features treatment rooms and nail and pedicure bars.

"The spa at Westminster Lodge has been such an exciting project for us. It couldn't be more different from the sauna, steam and spa bath facilities you would usually find at the edge of a pool in a local authority leisure centre, and it will be a stunning facility in its own right," says Dean Edwards, southern sales manager at Dalesauna.

"From its size at 200sq m, to its design and layout and the high specification of its products and finishes, the client has created a comprehensive spa offering that will operate at competitive prices," he adds.

Other facilities at the Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre will include a 180-station gym, a youth gym, two exercise studios, a group cycling studio, a sports hall with four courts and a 12m high climbing wall. There will also be three swimming pools: a 25m x 21m 10-lane main pool, a 17m x 10m teaching pool, and a confidence water area for young children with shallow water and water slides, showers and interactive wet play equipment.

For further information: www.dalesauna.co.uk



The centre replaces an existing adjacent facility, and will include a 200sq m spa



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IMPACT TRAINING

Client: Fitness Space, Ascot / Five Star Health and Fitness, Windsor

Supplier: Technogym

The Fitness Space, owned by Olympic and World Championship finalist athlete Tim Benjamin, is a private health club in Ascot, Berkshire – a results-orientated club with a friendly atmosphere that caters for more than 600 members.

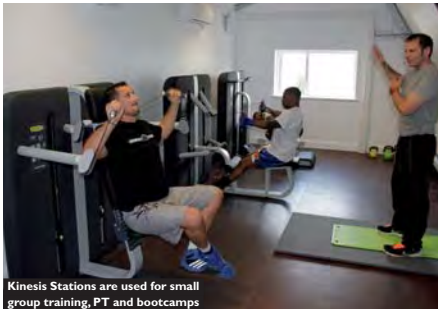
“Too often people give up on their fitness goals because of an unsupportive, unfriendly environment. We strive to break down barriers and address common misconceptions to exercise to get the results members deserve,” says Benjamin.

A strong, experienced and customer-focused team, a wide range of classes, fit camps, small group training and personal training all help this ethos to be achieved. Monthly club challenges, ‘member of the month’ and a testimonials board of members’ results – and how they have reached them – also contribute to the environment of positivity around the achievement of results.

“Secondary spend represents over 31 per cent of our revenue, so it’s important that we find ways to continually support our members. An innovative range of products is also important. We recently invested in Kinesis Stations to refresh our offering and maximise our gym floor space. When they were demonstrated to me I was blown away by their variety, versatility and potential – I knew I had to have them in my facility,” says Benjamin.

“Not only do Kinesis Stations set the facility apart in terms of product innovation, but the range also assists from a customer satisfaction point of view as it caters for everyone. I can get a great workout personally, but I can also use the equipment to train a 70-year-old client – the versatility is huge. It really has been the best possible addition to the gym to help members achieve their results. The Stations are included in all small group training, personal training and bootcamps.

“Since launching Kinesis Stations, we’ve seen a 15 per cent increase in personal training revenues, as well as a stronger conversion of prospects to members because the team is



Kinesis Stations are used for small group training, PT and bootcamps

able to demonstrate routines and really wow people with the range of exercises that can be used to achieve any of their fitness goals.”

Following on from the successful launch of Kinesis Stations at The Fitness Space in Ascot, the equipment has now been installed at Five Star Health and Fitness Windsor, a new club co-owned by Benjamin, to replicate the same results.

Five Star Health and Fitness brings together the training ethos of both Benjamin and his business partner, Matt Walton, to get the best out of people – Walton through the medium of mixed martial arts and Benjamin through his training methods as an elite athlete.

“Kinesis Stations have been incorporated into our functional zone at Five Star, one of five zones in the club: Mind & Body, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), Strength, Cardio and Functional,” says Benjamin. “Kinesis has already been previewed to members and the response has been superb, from members looking to build muscle mass or improve posture through to our MMA guys, who have been using the equipment for specific warm-up circuits and to build core strength. Once again, this demonstrates the equipment’s huge versatility for our members.”

For further information: www.technogym.com/kinesisstations



Kinesis Stations are helping convert prospects into members...



... and PT revenues have increased by 15 per cent



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The Kinesis Stations line includes 6 machines that provide exceptional training variety, intuitive use, virtually no adjustments and no cable interference.* Trainers can easily engage members and keep them motivated. Kinesis Stations completes the functional training platform by Technogym, including Kinesis One, Kinesis Class and Arke.

* FullGravity Technology, exclusive patent by Technogym.

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Product Round-Up



SportsArt Green System

SportsArt Fitness will be launching its Green System, designed to turn human energy into usable power, at Leisure Industry Week (LIW) 2012. The system uses a pod of fitness products attached to an inverter that harnesses human-generated power from exercisers. This feeds back to the power grid as usable energy. SportsArt claims this is the first 'plug and play' solution of its kind to offset costs using human energy.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

sportsart



CardioWall to offer fun workout games

Rugged Interactive has launched a giant interactive training wall. The CardioWall is designed to offer an all-over workout while providing mental stimulation and entertainment. It comprises a tough, moulded panel with a number of bullet-proof, interactive LED pads. The multi-user wall has touch pads and a range of programmes designed to challenge hand-eye co-ordination, endurance, core strength, reactions and flexibility. Interactive games include Clearout and Chaser reaction tests.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS

rugged interactive

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Power Plate's pro7 with stabilising technology

Power Plate International will be launching the pro7 machine with integrated video coaching at LIW 2012. The model includes a touch-screen and pro-motion technology, designed to give users a personalised workout. It comes with pre-programmed video workout guides and access to more than 1,000 exercise videos and 250 progressive full-body workouts. It has a large base platform area for varied exercises and has 'stax' technology designed to provide stability, support and a good transfer of vibrations.



fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS

power plate



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

octane

Octane LateralX movement to copy life

Octane Fitness will be releasing the LateralX (LX8000) at LIW 2012. The self-powered cross-trainer is designed to move smoothly from a vertical elliptical stepping motion to a side-to-side motion, intended to mimic everyday life movement. Combining low-impact elliptical and lateral motion, the machine's total-body workouts give movement in three planes – front to back, side to side and rotational – for customised, functional exercise. The LateralX offers 10 variable lateral width settings and new workouts, including quad power and thigh toner.

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18 – 20 SEPTEMBER 2012

LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK 2012



This year's LIW will offer the usual dynamic mix of product innovation, educational content and networking opportunities. We look ahead to the event, which takes place at the NEC, in Birmingham from 18–20 September

Leisure Industry Week (LIW) returns to the NEC in Birmingham, UK, later this month with more than 300 exhibitors, for what promises to be another inspirational and innovative showcase for the leisure industry.

Once again, LIW welcomes all of the leading fitness companies to the show. Technogym, Life Fitness, Matrix, Precor, Power Plate, Escape Fitness, Pulse and a whole host of others will bring their newest equipment for visitors to try out for themselves.

Back by popular demand, LIW 2012 will once again deliver more than 150 hours of seminar sessions in the Education Village, sponsored by Matrix, which will be positioned on the trade show floor. Visitors seeking CPD accreditation, inspiration or simply wanting to keep up-to-date with industry trends will have hours of free education at their fingertips, from practical advice and expert-led sessions to case studies providing the knowledge health and fitness professionals need to stay ahead of the game. This year's highlights will include the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) keynote, Olympian speaker sessions and the CPD-accredited REPs National Convention.

HOLDING THE FLAME

The Education Village will also offer an introduction to the FIA & Matrix FLAME Awards, which were established more than 15 years ago to recognise and applaud excellence and best practice in the health and fitness industry.

In the first of three Tuesday afternoon sessions, an FIA representative will join Mike Hill, MD of Leisure-net Solutions –

LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK – THE FACTS

Venue: NEC, Birmingham

Dates: 18–20 September 2012

Opening times: Tues 18 September, 10.00am–5.00pm | Weds 19 September, 10.00am–5.00pm | Thurs 20 September, 10.00am–4.00pm

Registration: Pre-register for the show for free at www.liw.co.uk

Keep up to date at: Twitter @L_I_W, LinkedIn 'Leisure Industry Week' group and Facebook 'Leisure Industry Week' page

which independently assesses the awards – to take delegates through the entry process that enables facilities to test themselves against the very best in the sector:

Caroline Constantine, director of Right Directions – which delivers Sport England's quality assurance mark Quest, as well as the FIA's Code of Practice – will then offer 10 top tips on how to improve your business using a 'Plan, Do, Monitor, Review' process.

Customer surveys and mystery calls make up 40 per cent of the FLAME score, and in the last session, Hill and quality management specialist Dave Monkhouse will explain how FLAME uses the Net Promoter Score® (NPS) to benchmark entrants, what the key drivers of customer satisfaction are, and why operators should harness NPS' powerful customer experience matrix.



ON A QUEST

Wednesday afternoon in the Education Village will see operators enlightened on the Sport England quality assurance mark Quest, which has been managed by Right Directions and Leisure-net Solutions for the past two years.

The first of the three sessions will explain the radical changes this continuous improvement tool has undergone, and why it's even more essential for operators in today's economic climate. Quest regional manager Monkhouse will then guide attendees through 10 top tips for improving their Quest result using the 'Plan, Do, Monitor and Review' process. And finally, on behalf of Leisure-net Solutions – which delivers the National Benchmarking Service (NBS) for Sport England – Hill will explain the key drivers of customer satisfaction.



Try before you buy: LIW showcases the latest kit, programmes and services

Hill will also present the findings of recent research, commissioned by LIV, into the trend that is outdoor fitness.

Speaking about the educational content, LIW event manager David Sanvoisin says: "It's vital that LIW continues to provide a combination of high quality free seminars and reasonably priced CPD opportunities to our health and fitness visitors. We work hard to represent the breadth of the leisure industry and also to highlight the vibrancy and creativity evident every day in health clubs across the country.

"We're proud that many of our visitors come to LIW with an open mind, ready to be inspired by something they might never have considered before. LIW represents an annual meeting-place for the industry, with many of our visitors attending each year in the knowledge that they will have the chance to meet up and share best practice with their peers."

"WE'RE PROUD THAT MANY OF OUR VISITORS COME TO LIW WITH AN OPEN MIND, READY TO BE INSPIRED"

CROSS-SECTOR APPEAL

As LIW caters for the entire leisure industry, visiting professionals will not be confined to the Health & Fitness, Pool & Spa or Sport sections of the show. They will also have the chance to investigate secondary spend options within the Eat & Drink section, or visit Leisure Facilities for building management solutions.

Play & Attractions, meanwhile, can provide valuable additional revenue ideas. This year, the indoor play body PAR – made up of the Play Providers Association, Association of Play Industries

and the Register of Play Inspectors International – will present a seminar day covering all aspects of the indoor play sector. It will also offer practical advice, helping delegates to evaluate whether they have the opportunity to enter the market. There will be speakers from Johnson Reed, The Play Inspection Company (RPII) and Play Concepts.

The PAR new start-up programme is free of charge and available to all LIV visitors. There will also be a networking lunch with the chance for one-to-one discussions with PPA supplier members. ▶

▶ **FOCUS ON CARBON-NEUTRAL FITNESS**

Across the board, LIW aims to inform delegates of ways to ensure they are using the most efficient and modern business practices. In this vein, there will be content at the 2012 show focused around green initiatives and new technologies.

The Carbon Trust will be speaking at LIW for the first time. Its seminar – part of the free Education Village sponsored by Matrix – takes place on Weds 19 September at 11.30am in LIW Education Theatre 3. It will cover a range of topics for the leisure sector: energy-saving opportunities that provide significant savings and quick payback; best practice, case studies and technologies; and an overview of key barriers to implementation and top tips on how to overcome these.

Quality management and health and safety support specialist, Right Directions, will launch its Environmental Management Support Package at LIW this year. This package will help organisations to develop an environmental management system and ultimately minimise their negative impact on the environment. Through training, systems and procedures, it will enable operators to create a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate how environmental processes are managed, and the steps that have been taken to reduce energy consumption and overall carbon footprint. Ultimately, this will help them to achieve internationally



“SOME OF THE UK’S LEADING OLYMPIC FACES WILL BE JOINING EXHIBITORS ON THEIR STANDS AND ON THE LIVE STAGE”

recognised standards such as the ISO14001 mark.

Also flying the flag for a green approach in fitness facilities, SportsArt Fitness will be showcasing its new Green System. The system – which has its UK debut at LIW 2012 – uses a ‘pod’ of fitness products attached to an inverter that harnesses human-generated power from exercisers, feeding this back into the power grid as usable energy. This is claimed to be the first ‘plug and play’ solution of its kind for health and fitness club owners who want to offset power costs by freely harnessing human energy.

Mark Turner, MD of SportsArt Fitness, reports great success from a trial of the product in the US and Canada: “The power inverter attached to the Green System is about the size of a stereo receiver and has a regular 240V AC plug.

To operate the system, a person would simply plug it in to a 240V AC outlet and start exercising.

“Each pod can generate up to 2,000 watts an hour during full use. Calculations based on replacing all ellipticals and cycles with SportsArt Green Systems suggest that the typical health club could make savings of between £1,500 and £2,000 a year on electricity bills.”

The Green System joins an established line of eco-friendly fitness products offered by SportsArt Fitness. The launch of its ECO-POWR™ treadmill five years ago offered club owners a treadmill that used 32 per cent less energy than a traditional club treadmill. Additionally, SportsArt offers a line of completely self-generating ellipticals and cycles that require no outside power source whatsoever to operate.



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▶ REPS CPD PROGRAMME

The Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) will be running its National Convention over all three days of LIW 2012. This year's convention is full of vital updates and bite-sized CPD-accredited training to keep delegates on top of industry trends. There will be one point awarded per session attended.



Programme highlights include keynote sessions from: weight loss guru Pete Cohen, who will be presenting on the topic of 'Obesity – an untapped fitness market'; Tim Fearon of The Extraordinary Coaching Company, who will present 'Welcome to the age of different'; and Bob Laventure of Later Life Training, presenting 'Can you really teach an old dog new tricks?'

In addition to these keynotes, REPs will present a dynamic selection of 40 interactive workshops delivered by leading industry experts. These include the following sessions:

DAY 1 (TUES 18 SEPTEMBER)

Benn Pratt, research & development manager, Premier Training International: 'Carbs for exercise? Think again!'

Gill Cummings-Bell, Drummond Education: 'Maximise building a small business into a brand'

Greg Sellar, IFS international presenter of the year 2010: 'Fitness fx; Blast fx – bodyweight-only conditioning group training class set to music'

Robin Gargrave, YMCAfit: 'Working with specialist medical conditions'

Glenn Withers, founding director, Australian Physiotherapy & Pilates Institute (APPI): 'Pilates for osteoporosis: the epidemic challenge'

DAY 2 (WEDS 19 SEPTEMBER)

Alan Jackson, director, Discovery Learning: 'Food addiction – it's not all in the mind!'

Shalini Bhalla, founder & masterclass instructor, Just Jhoom!: 'Just Jhoom! Fitness masterclass'

Elaine McNish, physical activity manager, Macmillan Cancer Support: 'Move More – physical activity and cancer'

Dan McDonagh, senior manager, group training & development, TRX: 'Fitness

Anywhere supported by Escape Fitness – TRX® Training for active seniors'

Christine North, YMCA Fit: 'The dos, don'ts and whys of post natal exercise'

DAY 3 (THURS 20 SEPTEMBER)

Adam Daniel, PTA Faculty & ViPR

master trainer, PTA Global/FitPro: 'Functional anatomy – what is fascia?'

Sarah Bolitho, curriculum and business development co-ordinator, Fitness Wales: 'Food for mood'

Chris Rogers, co-director, Vision Fitness Academy: 'Bootcamp trainer tool box'

Keith Smith, global master trainer, Life Fitness Academy: 'Training the active independent older adult'

Places on these sessions are limited in number. Visitors can book a place while registering for the show at www.liw.co.uk, with tickets available on a first-come, first-served basis. An exclusive discount is available to REPs members.

If you are already registered to attend LIW 2012, simply return to the registration page, enter your name and unique reference number, scroll to the bottom of the form, opt in and select your sessions.

LAUNCH OF LIW LIVE

LIW Live launches this year in the wake of London 2012, as a platform for exhibitors to display the best of their stand and services on a live stage right in the middle of the show floor.

Some of the UK's leading Olympic faces will be joining exhibitors on their stands and will also make an appearance on the brand new Live stage, attending question & answer sessions based around the fitness industry and trends they are noticing. Already lined up for this programme are Greg Searle, who made history at London 2012 with his comeback to rowing 20 years after winning Olympic gold, and badminton ace Gail Emms, both attending with Precor. They will be joined by three-time world champion gymnast Beth Tweddle MBE, founder of exhibiting company Total Gymnastics, who will be showcasing her company's new programme, Gym Stars.

Also taking part will be the cast of *The Apprentice 2012*, with contestant Stephen Brady exhibiting with his new



Olympic rower Greg Searle will be among the sports stars at LIW

fitness company mysuccesscoach.com. And these won't be the only TV stars at LIW Live – *The Biggest Loser* winner Kevin McLernon will be with Concept2 at the show, with plans to outline ways in which fitness providers can attract disengaged participants to their facilities.

With group fitness trends emerging all the time, visitors will have a chance

to see bite-sized demonstrations of the next big things to hit the market. These include Powerhoop sessions, which visitors can try out – with the most keenest Powerhooper winning a hoop. Les Mills will also perform its vibrant new SH'BAM routines on the live stage.

The LIW Live programme will run throughout the three days of the show.



"Contact Manager will give us more time to sell more memberships and is already becoming an invaluable addition to the team!"

CONTACT MANAGER joins the One Leisure sales team

Huntingdonshire District Council is the first to launch Gladstone Health and Leisure's Contact Manager sales management software. One Leisure, which manages five leisure sites in Huntingdon, Ramsey, Sawtry, St. Ives and St. Neots, piloted the new system over a three-month period, assisting Gladstone in ironing out any glitches before its official launch this month.

After working on the initial stages of Contact Manager I am excited to start using the software. The way it will assist the sales team in terms of cutting time and, more importantly, eliminating the need to duplicate work appear invaluable.

Adding all contact information directly into Contact Manager at the prospect stage means all details are at hand. The existing member check ensures that

previous information is included in the customer journey. Historically I've had to input into our Plus2 membership system and then detail all member journeys on a separate spreadsheet, constantly moving between the two, updating and double checking changes made to a prospect's or member's profile.

If I wanted to catch up with any non-joiners I would have to find them via the spreadsheet and then cross reference with Plus2, the same as I would to check if any prospects had joined during my absence. It's the way that Contact Manager integrates with Plus2 that makes tracking simple.

Contact Manager alerts the sales staff to new tasks that require attention along the sales process and I can easily see the sales team's daily logs, such as outgoing calls, and can instantly check on their contact and prospect progress, along with any outstanding issues such as follow up contact with new members. Basically the system acts as their diary, but using

the Plus2 database so that it tracks the customer journey along its way.

Outreaching is also easy. With a template, emails and text messages can be sent to multiple recipients at the touch of a button. And I can run all the reports I need from one place, in real time too.

The greatest thing that Contact Manager will do for us is save time. Our system before was very laborious and so it's a delight to open a programme and see how simple it is to use. Contact Manager will give us more time to sell more memberships and is already becoming an invaluable addition to the team!

Nadine Thomson, Member Care Leader at One Leisure

To find out more about Contact Manager or to see the video case study, call +44 (0)1491 201010 or visit www.gladstonemrm.com



"The greatest thing that Contact Manager will do for us is save time"



EXHIBITOR NEWS



THE LATEST NEWS FROM SOME EXHIBITORS AT LIW 2012

18-20 Sept 2012 - NEC, Birmingham UK

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

ASHBOURNE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Tel: +44 (0)871 271 2088
www.ashbourne-management.co.uk

Ashbourne launch their Membership Validation Till System at LIW. This makes it easy for clubs to increase secondary spend. By linking members' payment status to a touch-screen till system, clubs can allow members to make purchases for classes, drinks, supplements, in fact anything, without the need for cash. All purchases are able to be added to a member's monthly membership direct debit. A complete package of software, touch-screen, secure till and receipt printer is available as a great deal to Ashbourne clients. See a demo on our stand, H396.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES



Club members can make purchases without needing cash using Ashbourne's touch screen system

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SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

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www.betterbelly.co.uk
SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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When it comes to the supply of Wellness equipment, nobody does it better than Certikin as the luxurious Headland Hotel in Newquay will testify. Apex Pool Engineers recently carried out a refurbishment of the existing pool and added an impressive Wellness suite - including the sought-after Tranquillity range from Certikin. A Cornish salt steam room, aromatherapy showers, large tiled overflow spa bath and a stunning sauna were all installed to great acclaim.

SECTION: POOL & SPA



Certikin refurbished the Headland Hotel pool



Codelocks installed KitLock into Champneys

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Champneys install KitLock Visit us on stand F100 and find out why Champneys Health Spa has removed all the key-operated locks from their changing room lockers and replaced them with KitLock digital cabinet locks instead. KitLock uses a four-digit code rather than a key to operate and secure lockers. Champneys guests simply enter a code, "lock and go", free to enjoy the facilities without having to carry a key around with them. "The KitLock solution is more professional and, from a guest perspective, the lockers are now far more secure as keys are not left lying around in robe pockets," said Alex De Carvalho, Managing Director at Champneys. In 'locker-mode' function, KitLock operates with a single-use code setting facility. The guest enters a four-digit code, that will lock and open the locker only once, then be erased. The locker then remains open until another guest.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

CONCEPT 2

Tel: +44 (0)115 9455450
www.wattbike.com

Concept2's LIW stand will showcase the innovative functional zone that can be created by combining Concept2 Indoor Rowers with SkiErgs and Wattbikes. These high-accuracy products have been adopted by the CrossFit community, confirming their suitability for functional training. On 18th September, Kevin McLernon, winner of ITV's Biggest Loser, will be appearing on the Concept2 stand and the LIW Live Stage, describing how instrumental to his amazing weight loss the Concept2 Indoor was.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Cybex goes from strength to strength

As one of the industry's leading providers of premium exercise equipment, 2012 has already been a busy year for Cybex. The company has seen the opening of its new UK showcase site and Games-time Training Venue SportHouse in March; new additions to the UK team in sales and training departments as

well as the promotion of Rob Thurston from UK sales manager to commercial director. Not forgetting many new sites and extending partnerships with existing clients, plus the launch of award-winning product ranges, Cybex UK looks set to build on the success of 2011 with a fantastic 2012.

Global success supported by UK

In an announcement made in February to the US financial markets, Cybex reported a series of strong financial results for 2011, which saw net sales across the global group increase by 14% to \$140.1m.

On explaining what the results mean to the UK market, Rob Thurston, commercial director said, "It's important that our customers can see the positive financial results and overall financial position of the business, both in the UK and as a global group. The successes of the last 12 months have been replicated in the UK and we have maintained this success throughout 2012.

"This means we are again confident of strong year on year growth and as the company continues to invest further resources in bringing new and exciting products to the market, our customers can be sure that our product ranges will remain at the forefront of the health and fitness industry."

Extending partnerships with new & existing clients

March 2012 saw the official launch of SportHouse, a leading fitness training facility and Cybex's brand new UK showcase site, located in Barking.

Whilst it is the sports hall and not the gym that was awarded the status of Games-time Training Venue, it is the gym that will play a central part in retaining the sporting legacy, as SportHouse aims to target both elite performing teams

and talented young athletes, alongside the local community.

With over 1000m² of training space and over 250 pieces of Cybex cardiovascular and strength equipment, SportHouse houses one of the country's most comprehensive sports conditioning gyms. Described by Sir Steve Redgrave CBE as "world class," SportHouse has received significant press attention since its official opening, which was attended by some of the industry's leading figures.

"The gym at SportHouse has been designed to cater for a diverse range of users," commented Mark Harrop, director of sport and leisure industry consultancy HBA.

"Cybex's focus on engineering equipment that is biomechanically correct factored greatly in our decision and with its comprehensive range of IFI accredited equipment, we felt that Cybex provided the best solution for the site." The facilities at SportHouse can be viewed at www.sporthouse.co.uk.

The past 12 months has also seen Cybex extend its longstanding relationship with Nuffield Health, the UK's leading provider of employee wellbeing services and market leader in the design, build and management of on-site company health and fitness facilities.

As one of Cybex's key clients, Nuffield Health has partnered with Cybex on the provision of a range of corporate training facilities to include Deutsche Bank, Waitrose HQ and since January 2012, Network Rail HQ, Invesco Perpetual, Lloyds Banking Group and The Club at Baltimore, London's largest residential gym facility.

"Nuffield Health is the largest provider of employee wellbeing services in the UK so it is only fitting that we have partnered with Cybex on a number of high-profile projects. This partnership with Cybex enables us to deliver first-class fitness and wellbeing facilities, with excellent levels of service, professionalism and expertise," confirmed Daniel Law, operations director for Nuffield Health.

"The equipment Cybex provides is of such a high quality that we continue to receive very positive feedback from our corporate clients."

An IFI first for Cybex

As one of a select number of suppliers to offer IFI accredited equipment, Cybex's Total Access range is certified to IFI standard level 2.

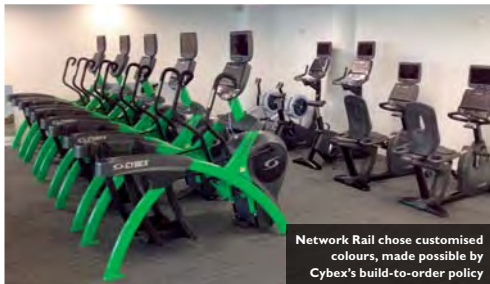
"By incorporating the unique design requirements directly into our product



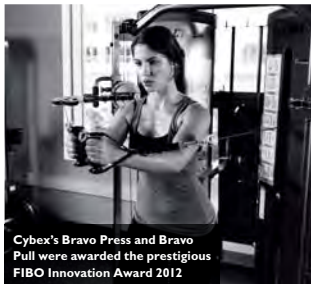
The Cybex E3 View is one of the industry's most advanced entertainment consoles



SportHouse is home to over 250 pieces of Cybex equipment, including the Big Iron lifting platform



Network Rail chose customised colours, made possible by Cybex's build-to-order policy



Cybex's Bravo Press and Bravo Pull were awarded the prestigious FIBO Innovation Award 2012

research and development, we've been able to produce a range of both cardio and strength equipment that is accessible to the physically impaired, but which doesn't exclude other exercisers," confirms Richard Purves, Cybex senior regional manager.

Enrigger, a local authority-owned training facility and existing Cybex client based in York, was the first centre in the UK to be awarded the Inclusive Fitness Mark. This September will see the opening of its newly-extended training facility, taking its number of Cybex equipment to almost 90 pieces.

"The positive feedback we've had from our members has supported our decision to re-engage with Cybex and our new suite of premium equipment will further ensure that we can deliver to our members' requirements," confirmed Paul Bickle, leisure centre manager.

Delivering the latest in technology and design

Launching at this year's Leisure Industry Week, the Cybex 770 cardio series is the company's most advanced range of premium commercial cardio equipment. Incorporating a treadmill, upright and

recumbent bikes as well as Cybex's ground-breaking lower and total body Arc Trainers, the 770 series guarantees maximum durability, stability and greater comfort, whilst also offering more entertainment options than any other product range in the company's history.

Cybex will also be launching its 625 cardio series at LIW 2012, offering customers an alternative product range for commercial use.

Both the new 625 and 770 series are compatible with another of Cybex's latest innovations and one of the industry's most advanced entertainment consoles, the Cybex E3 View:

"Recognising that everyone approaches exercise differently, we have developed the E3 view to give users three distinct viewing modes that deliver the precise content they want," confirmed Rob Thurston.

This year's LIW will also feature Cybex's revolutionary Bravo functional training system. Comprising of the Bravo functional trainer and Bravo Lift, Press and Pull systems, the four machines have been incorporated into a brand new Bravo Boot Camp training programme; Cybex's Bravo Workout

Guide, a free App that is available for download via the Cybex website and iTunes, can also be used in conjunction with the equipment.

Utilising Progressive Stabilisation, Cybex's Bravo Press and Bravo Pull are the first multi-function cable training stations to offer the stability and strength potential found in single-function, fixed-path equipment along with the expanded movement variety typical with multi-function cable training systems; in recognition of this, the series was awarded the prestigious FIBO Innovation Award 2012 for its patented Progressive Stabilisation system in April.

Exciting times ahead

"We've experienced a fantastic year so far, with many new projects already secured over the coming months," confirmed Rob Thurston.

"As a brand, we are internationally-renowned for our premium quality, highly durable equipment and as we continue to invest in new technology, research and design, Cybex will continue to cement its position as one of the industry's leading equipment manufacturers." ●

► **CYBEX INTERNATIONAL UK LTD**

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Cybox is a leading manufacturer of premium exercise equipment, designed to improve physical well being, function and performance. Launching at this year's Leisure Industry Week, the Cybox 770 series is the company's most advanced range of premium commercial cardiovascular equipment. Incorporating a treadmill, upright and recumbent bikes as well as Cybox's ground-breaking lower and total body Arc Trainers, the 770 series guarantees maximum durability, stability and greater comfort, whilst also offering more entertainment options than any other product range in the company's history. Cybox will also be launching its 625 cardiovascular series at LIW, offering customers an alternative product range for commercial use. Both the new 625 and 770 series are compatible with another of Cybox's latest innovations and one of the industry's most advanced entertainment consoles, the Cybox E3 View. Offering users three distinct viewing modes, the E3 View high definition embedded monitor is also fully compatible with iPhone and iPod connections. LIW will also feature Cybox's revolutionary Bravo functional training system; in recognition of its unique Progressive Stabilisation system, the series was awarded the prestigious FIBO Innovation Award 2012 in April.



Cybox will reveal its 770 CV series

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Dalesauna leads innovation in sauna and steam relaxation

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It is without doubt true that everything does go in cycles, and indeed the Local Authority and Trust sector have certainly come back strong in the past couple of years, despite the much mooted government spending cuts. It seems that some of the more entrepreneurial authorities have seen the future, which is not all about pure fitness but the more all encompassing "wellness" and the latest new builds and refurbishments have certainly taken this into consideration. The Lagoon, Paisley, Westminster Lodge St, Albans and Ramsgate Leisure Centre are just three facilities that have committed hundreds of thousands (millions in some cases), to offering better facilities for the community, and with wellbeing and mental health, high on the agenda, this seems to be the start of an ongoing trend, as the benefits of relaxation now counts as highly as pure fitness.

SECTION: POOL & SPA

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Eurosite's on-site solutions are now available in the UK

Launching into the UK leisure industry at LIW 2012, EuroSite Power offers a capital free, risk free way to reduce energy costs forever. EuroSite Power's On-Site Utility Solutions are already hugely established in the US and are now available in the UK. Lower energy costs, reduced taxation and increased cash flow are instantly achieved with zero capital outlay. The



equipment required is financed, installed, owned and operated by EuroSite Power rather than the client - who simply pays for the energy they use at a cheaper rate than without the equipment in place. For more information, visit stand P236.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES ▶

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STAND P221



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www.fia.org.uk

The FIA is the trade body for the UK health and fitness sector, representing over 3,000 outdoor and indoor organisations from the public, private and third sectors. As a facilitator, the FIA work across the following areas;

- talking to government to ensure sure physical activity, health and wellbeing is high on the agenda
- creating partnerships in the pursuit of a healthier nation
- delivering health and wellbeing programmes to increase physical activity

• developing new initiatives to improve the quality of provision offered by the sector

• organising events to up skill the workforce

• building and defending the reputation of the sector

• delivering www.spogo.co.uk a customer-facing digital service to make searching and finding physical activities as simple as other consumer-friendly online services. The fact is together we can achieve more; join the FIA today visit us at LIV stand H465.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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www.gantner.com

GANTNER Electronic is the leading European manufacturer of SMART Card system solutions. All GANTNER products are specially designed for the requirements of the global leisure industry. The offered system solutions include access control, automated check-in, electronic wardrobe locking systems, and cashless payment applications. GANTNER has proven to be amongst the most reliable on the market. High quality, great design, flexibility and short payback times are GANTNER's strengths. GANTNER hardware and 3rd party club management software create a fully integrated system solution which is extremely convenient and secure. Boost your profits and streamline your organisation with SMART Card Technology.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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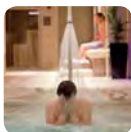
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VICTORIA MACLEOD
spa manager, the old course
hotel, st andrews

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DUNCAN GIBB
centre manager, hermitage
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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Hippo equipment promotes play

SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS

Learn2 Swim

achieves Mission Impossible



Fusion launched Gladstone's Learn2 Swim course management module as an early adopter in January this year, installing it at Hillingdon Sport and Leisure Complex. The Learn2 Swim trial marked the start of a new three-year contract between Gladstone and Fusion Lifestyle, which will take the partnership to more than 10 years.

The Learn2 Swim software, which has been endorsed by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), is designed to simplify the complicated and time-consuming swim school administration process, allowing operators to register pupils on courses, manage accreditation at the poolside and ease the movement of pupils between levels. It can also provide tailored reports on joiners, leavers, pupils changing classes and class occupancy.

Mike Carruthers, head of ICT at Fusion Lifestyle, says: "The trial of Learn2 Swim was led by a couple of enthusiastic members of the swim team and so far we've had very positive responses."

"The main benefits are: continuous assessment, which I believe will help us keep children swimming for longer, as they can automatically enrol onto the next level; time saving on administration, meaning our instructors can spend less time recording attendance and attainment and more time improving lesson delivery and interacting with their classes; and information for the parents at no extra cost."

In line with many operators, Fusion's previous approach to enrolment was term-based and, with tens of thousands of children on the swim school programme, there would be a rush every 10 weeks, with parents required to re-enrol within a relatively short booking window, creating

Registered charity Fusion Lifestyle manages 36 pools across its estate of 52 public leisure facilities. The administration of its thousands of swimming classes each week may sound like mission impossible, especially when you consider that equates to well over a million swimming lessons every year, but according to Fusion's head of ICT, Gladstone Health and Leisure's new Learn2 Swim software will soon make light of those figures.

lengthy queues at reception and pressure for parents. "Learn2 Swim's 50-week rolling programme will improve this significantly," continues Carruthers. "Re-enrolment is driven by when the child is ready to move up a class, not by pre-dated terms."

Teachers use a portable, waterproof, touch-screen device to take registers, store notes and assess pupils at the poolside. Carruthers says the staff truly see the advantages: "The device increases their time poolside and reduces the time spent on admin in the back office. It offers reliable, up-to-date information so they can easily track the progress of individual pupils and their classes as a whole, respond quickly to any parent queries, monitor attendance levels and see any medical issues at a glance."

The intelligent software promotes movement between courses by flagging up children who are ready to progress and, if necessary, can put them onto a waiting list in line with the parent preferences, for days and lesson times, which can be saved on the system.

Carruthers adds: "Learn2 Swim has the added benefit of data sharing and enables automated customer contact, emailing or texting customers when a pupil is

approved to move up a class or needs to pay for lessons, driving our engagement and retention potential."

The web-based system also carries a 'home portal', allowing parents to access and review the progress of their child at their leisure, as well as re-enrolling their child online when an email trigger alerts that they are ready to move up a level.

"The new software has been a real success. Obviously as a completely new product it's had its challenges and issues, but the response from the team at Gladstone was very positive. Learn2 Swim will now take our swimming lesson programme to the next level," concludes Carruthers.

Learn2 Swim will be introduced to a further 10-15 of Fusion Lifestyle's pools in time for the autumn term in September, and will be rolled out to the remaining sites in the new year.

To find out more about
Learn2 Swim, call +44
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Innovative Leisure will once again be present at LIW in 2012 and this years' show is set to be the biggest yet for the leading supplier of high energy, adventure play attractions. A first for LIW, our Mobile Zip Line, recipient of a 'Best new product' award at IAAPA 2011 makes an appearance, and visitors to our stand will be able to try the latest in thrilling mobile attractions for themselves. For the second year running, you will be able to test yourself on one of our Sky Trail High Ropes Courses with this years course set to be even bigger. Our usual climbing attractions will also be on show as will our Water Wars range outdoors. Our full team will be on hand to talk to you about any of our products. You can find Innovative Leisure on stand A40 on the show floor and outside on stand AS10.

SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS

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For 25 years, Jordan Fitness have been at the forefront of design, manufacture and supply of quality commercial grade, functional fitness equipment, in the UK and internationally. Jordan Fitness also provides training through their comprehensive REPs accredited training programme. As part of their Results Based Training (RBT) programme, Jordan Fitness also offers a full facility design and planning service. Their in-house creative design team can provide 3D visuals in conjunction with advice from the experienced sales team. From inception to finance, installation and then on-going staff training, Jordan Fitness is able to offer a package that is unrivalled within the industry. Jordan Fitness will be showcasing and demonstrating several new functional fitness products at Leisure Industry Week (LIW) 2012 on Stand H650. For more information about Jordan Fitness, visit their website at www.jordanfitness.co.uk, call +44 (0)1945 880257, or email sales@jordanfitness.co.uk

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Jordan Fitness will be demonstrating its new range at LIW ▶



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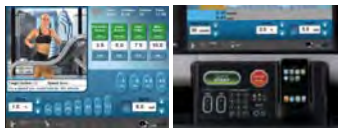
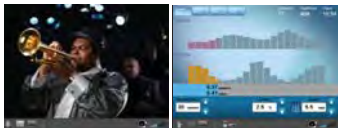
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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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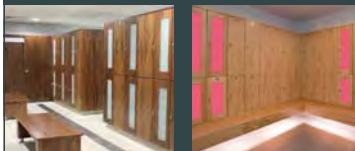
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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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**SECTION:
HEALTH & FITNESS**



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS

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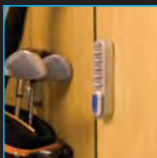
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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES



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Pommel Torso works the torso muscles more effectively than conventional ab exercises



The Pommel Torso would slot neatly into any gym set-up

was driven by his passion to see people exercising safely and correctly, having treated many patients who had hurt their back through exercise, often due to bad technique or poor core strength.

The Pommel Torso is unique; no other machine targets all the muscles of the core and lower back. The machine is designed to be more effective than standard abdominal exercises, providing a more beneficial and well-rounded workout. While standard exercises predominantly target the rectus abdominis muscles, Pommel Torso targets all of the muscles of the core, lower and upper back in a functional manner.

Research undertaken at the University of Central Lancashire showed that the Pommel Torso resulted in greater overall abdominal and back muscle activity than standard core exercises. As a result, the Pommel Torso allows users to get a more effective core workout in a shorter space of time. Using the Pommel Torso also elevates heart rate, therefore providing additional cardio benefits. The

research showed that using the machine for an average of 15 minutes, three times a week for six weeks resulted in a significant reduction in body fat.

Recently, the Pommel Torso has been trialled by The Chelsea Club, an Elite London health club, located within the Stamford Bridge Stadium complex. The machine has received rave reviews from members who report a lower rate of perceived level of exertion, despite still getting a great core workout.

Darren Garrett, the club's fitness manager, said: *'This could make a real impact when it hits the market. It gives members an effective way to condition their core safe in the knowledge that they are performing the exercise correctly and not putting their back at risk. Installation is so easy it could slot neatly into nearly any gym set up.'*

For more information about Pommel Torso see www.pommeltorso.co.uk or call 0203 582 3822

PHYSICAL COMPANY

Tel: +44 (0)1494 769 222
www.physicalcompany.co.uk

Physical Company launch their EX:CEL training platform at this year's LIW. The platform bridges the gap between fitness equipment and exercise programming by way of an interactive online training zone. It's been designed by industry experts to take the stress out of keeping trainers up to date with the latest REPS accredited group exercise trends. Equipment featured during the first phase will be BOSU, Human Trainer, freeFORM and Kettlebells.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Physical Company launches its EX:CEL training platform online training zone



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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Calling all independent operators...

The Fitness Industry Independent Operators Unite forum will be returning to Leisure Industry Week (LIW) 2012 bringing you expert advice and new ideas to make your club or gym stand out from the competition.

This year's programme will be delivered by fellow independent operators who will share their experiences, mistakes, lessons and ideas with you.

Boost your knowledge with this fantastic FREE programme:

Day 1 - Wednesday 19 September 2012

14:00-14:40

Practical ideas that work for the UK Independent Operator

Sometimes you can go to a restaurant and order what you want, or pick and choose from a whole smorgus board of ideas. This session is based on the latter, with a panel of Independent Operators with years of experience of mistakes, successes, lessons and ideas that are easy to implement for any club owner in the UK. Clubs will take away quick-win ideas that they will produce quick-win results!

Panel of Independent Operators

15:00-15:40

Making money for your club from the 'other stuff' (not actual memberships)

In today's market of diminishing returns due to increased competition and physical activity alternatives, clubs have to maximise the revenue that they generate from non-membership money. This session is a panel of expert club owners who have been able to offer innovative secondary spend ideas that not only generate more money but also provide a better service to their existing membership base.

Panel of Independent Operators

16:00-16:40

Easy ways to use the internet to make more money for your independent club

Whether it's Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Foursquare or many other social media avenues, there is no doubt that the internet is here to stay. Due to the internet, a small Independent Operator can 'compete' with the big boys without leaving their reception. This session is a panel of club owners who have successfully achieved just that... and most importantly, you don't have to follow their Twitter account to learn those secrets. Simply turn up with an open mind!

Panel of Independent Operators

Day 2 - Thursday 20 September 2012

10:30-11:30

The great debate... Strengths/Weakness/Opportunities/Threats of being an Independent Operator in today's climate

The UK is undergoing a paradigm shift on how health clubs must adapt to survive in today's evolving market. This session will be an open forum 'discussion' about the pros and cons of being an Independent Operator in today's market with insights into the future of the industry and what opportunities are out there. This is a not-to-be-missed 'recovery' session after the previous night's festivities!

Panel of Independent Operators

Plus, celebrate your hard work at the IOU Industry party*

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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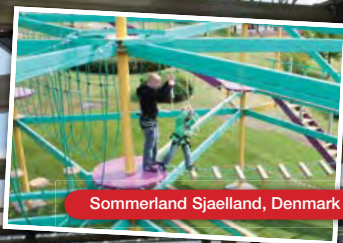


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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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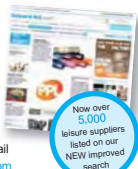
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Printed by Warners Midland.

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