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The founders of
Australia's largest gym
chain explain their
new concept **p68**

World Fit Summit

HCM report from
the first event
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Rasmus Ingerslev & Dr Mouna Esmaeilzadeh



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Obesity and cancer

Obesity has overtaken smoking as the leading cause of some common cancers, meaning the health and fitness industry must step up and join the fight, with a new push on prevention and plans to train staff to equip them to offer support

The health and fitness industry has the opportunity to take meaningful action in the battle against cancer, with the news that obesity has overtaken smoking for the first time as the leading cause of some of the most common cancers, including bowel, kidney, ovarian and liver.

A new study from leading charity Cancer Research UK (CRUK) has found that being obese plays a significant role in the development of 13 different types of cancer.

It does this by causing inflammation in the body which stops it responding to insulin. More insulin is then produced to compensate and this triggers an increase in cell production which can eventually lead to cancer.

Higher levels of insulin also mean more estrogen is circulating in the body, because fat cells can make estrogen in both men and women. This also raises cancer risk, as higher estrogen levels can lead to increased cell production.

The challenge we face in tackling this epidemic is even greater because of the sheer numbers involved – obese people now outnumber smokers by two to one, so just as one cancer-causing behaviour – smoking – is coming under control as a result of decades of effective public health interventions, so an even bigger problem is emerging in the form of obesity.

Michelle Mitchell, CRUK's chief executive, said the problem is only getting worse as we hit a record high for childhood obesity: "As smoking rates fall and obesity rates rise," she said, "We can clearly see the impact on the national health crisis."

The government's smoking cessation programme, which has waged war on the evil weed for decades, is a powerful example of how to change behaviour and illustrates just how long it takes and how dogged we need to be to make an impact.

As I write, the Conservative Party leadership contest is nearing fever pitch, and Boris Johnson has just announced that he would remove 'sin taxes' on things like alcohol and cigarettes. It's also widely believed that he would not support the sport and activity markets were he to become prime minister.

Such breathtakingly irresponsible statements show how fragile the situation is and how – even now, when we think we've got some momentum behind what we do – it's necessary to fight ever harder to make a case for our work. Clearly, we have a way to go before we have everyone on-side and the role of exercise in health is really recognised.

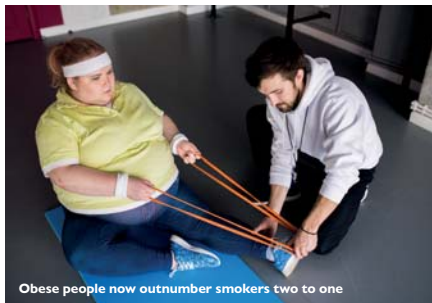


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/SEVENTYFOUR

Obese people now outnumber smokers two to one

Being qualified to deliver obesity reduction and oncology exercise must become standard training for all exercise professionals

We can fight the cancer epidemic on two fronts: firstly by helping people reverse obesity and secondly by making sure staff are trained to enable people with cancer to exercise safely.

To this end, we can take inspiration from the work of Wellness for Cancer, the organisation dedicated to training spa therapists to deliver treatments to people living with cancer.

Being qualified to deliver both obesity reduction and oncology exercise must become a standard part of training to be an exercise professional, so the benefits of exercise are available to all. This is especially vital given we know exercise can also improve quality of life for many cancer sufferers.

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George Foreman III – son of the heavyweight prizefighter – is expanding his US-based boxing gym business, and plans to have 20 sites open by 2020

MEET THE TEAM



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We must act now to bring fun fitness to every child

Justine Williams, Les Mills Born to Move

It's no surprise that 'fun is the answer' when it comes to engaging kids in activity. The Sport England Active Lives: Children & Young People report is fascinating and a call to action. But please, let's not make this too complicated... Let's release our inner kid and not sit still a moment longer. We must act now to implement interventions based on the evidence we have to create fun activities for children.

Here at Les Mills Born to Move we specialise in getting kids active. Since launching five years ago, we've learned a lot – mostly from children themselves. We go where the kids go: schools, holiday parks and now, with the launch of our free five-minute Move like the Avengers workout on Youtube, into their homes.



We've done our homework and for leisure operators this means we know what works.

A direct line to children doesn't exist as it does with adults. Kids trust their parents, teachers and friends first, hence our new Activators programme allows parents, teachers and kids themselves to take the lead.

We also know 'one size doesn't fit all' and



multi-component interventions and collaboration with key partners aligning to suit their space, staff and delivery options is essential. We're happy to change the plan, but never the goal!

It's time everyone pulled together to bring fun fitness to every child. Interesting as they are, we don't need more policies and reports. We know we need to make changes and we know how to engage kids. Let's get on with it.

“Let's release our inner kids and not sit still a moment longer”

Born to Move has released a free workout video for kids, based on The Avengers





Third Space now recruits instructors based on when they're most needed

Detailed insight means we can recruit instructors based on customer attendance trends

Antony Stewart, head of group exercise, Third Space

I was interested to read the feature on instructor pay, as well as the recent news story on the instructor white paper (HCM May 2019, p48), it certainly is true that treating your instructors right is key to success.

We've always valued our instructors, understanding they are central to our members' experience and critical to building relationships. Rather than have an ever-growing list of cover instructors – typical in this industry – we want a smaller team who are committed to Third Space and don't work anywhere else. You're only as good as your worst class. So a bad experience caused by the wrong choice of cover instructor can damage the member experience overall.

So we pay our instructors well and make it the best place to work, but are now



Antony Stewart

considering whether we need to pay people more to work on weekends and bank holidays too.

We currently have around 200 instructors working across our five clubs, running 4,000 classes every month, and over the last two years have been using the OurPeople workforce management platform to manage class cover.

Interrogating the data we can see who's asking for the

“We can now make tactical decisions to recruit instructors at specific times – advertising for pilates instructors on a Sunday morning for example”

most cover and when, how far in advance they're asking and which class categories need the most support.

It's clear the biggest holes are Friday nights, weekends and bank holidays.

While we're not surprised by the data, we haven't had this detailed insight before. Plus, what have we, or the rest of the industry, ever done about it in the past?

Based on these trends we've been able to make tactical decisions to recruit more instructors at specific times of the day or days of the week; literally advertising

for pilates instructors on a Sunday morning in East London, for example. It's completely changed the way we recruit. We have fewer people attend our auditions, because of the criteria, but they're all relevant, so there's a lot less wasted time for everyone.

Knowing what's 'normal' has been a big eye opener into what's going on in our clubs, and while we've been able to reduce cover by three per cent, when we recruit staff for new sites, we may well test the theory of paying more at weekends.



Parents often tell their children to become doctors or lawyers, but now they'll encourage their children to become fitness pros. At \$1,000 an hour, they'll make more than the best Wall Street lawyers. Trainers are the new superstars

PITBULL, TONY ROBBINS & BILL ZANKER

FOUNDERS AND ADVISERS, GRIT BXNG



From left: Pitbull, Tony Robbins and Bill Zanker are part of the team launching Grit Bxng, a new boutique gym

American rapper Pitbull and life coach guru Tony Robbins are part of the team working on New York boutique Grit Bxng, which opens its first site – a 5,500sq ft flagship near Union Square – this summer.

Venture capitalist and billionaire Tim Draper has invested in the company – Change your Life LLC – while the business will be run by entrepreneur Bill Zanker, founder of training company The Learning Annex, along with his daughter Edva Zanker and his son Dylan Zanker.

The Grit Bxng offer is based on a 50-minute signature method delivering HIIT group classes, with the “fundamentals of boxing at its core”.

NIGHT CLUB VIBE

The 5,000sq ft club's interior will feature a light and sound system designed to make a workout feel like a night out, with music playlists curated by Pitbull and motivational content – featuring Robbins – beamed on giant video screens.

Classes will take place in a three-module studio with treadmills, punch bags and benches.

Guests can also hang out in a fully licenced bar in the studio lounge – reputedly a first in New York City.

Grit Bxng is currently auditioning trainers from around the world, offering to pay US\$1,000 an hour for those with star drawing power.

“Parents often tell their children to become doctors or lawyers,” said Zanker.

“But now parents will encourage their children to become fitness pros. At \$1,000 an hour, they'll make more than the best Wall Street lawyers. Trainers are the new superstars of today.”

Guests will also be able to provide a star rating for their instructors and pay them tips through the Grit Bxng app, using the same approach as Uber.

MOTIVATIONAL MESSAGES

Robbins revealed his passion is to motivate people beyond the self-help programmes he's famous for, saying: “My life is about working with people to change their bodies, change their relationships, and change their lives. Grit Bxng will provide a space and experience unlike any other.”



Grit Bxng in New York has been designed for millennials

"My life is about working with people to change their bodies, change their relationships, and change their lives"

Tony Robbins

Pitbull – whose real name is Armando Perez – added: "With each new project I approach, the words 'you can't' and 'no' are just motivators that propel me to succeed and fuel my fire.

"That mentality is exactly what Grit Bxng embodies to me."

BITCOIN PIONEER

The operator believes it will be the first to accept Bitcoin. Investor Tim Draper said: "Grit Bxng will be the first studio chain to accept Bitcoin. Within three years, most other chains, like Soulcycle and Barry's Bootcamp, will be accepting Bitcoin. Grit Bxng will be the first of many."

The club's social media message is, 'Don't follow us on Instagram, come work out instead'.





This isn't a spin around the park: SUF Cycling requires participants to dig deep, which can push some people not used to HIIT out of their comfort zone

BEN KEENAN

SUF CYCLING: COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

What is SUF Cycling?

SUF Cycling is a comprehensive training programme to make cyclists stronger and faster. It combines workouts designed by world-class sports scientists with real footage from the biggest races in professional cycling – such as the Tour de France and the Tour of Italy – to create an effective, immersive and exciting indoor cycling programme.

To get stronger on the bike you have to do more than just ride, so yoga, strength and mental training is also incorporated. The programmes are designed specifically for those who want to build functional strength in a way that directly translates to better performance on the bike.

Yoga builds core strength, improves balance and flexibility, enhances recovery, and helps prevent injury.

Our strength training for cyclists series is a progressive, bodyweight-based strength programme that focuses on building power, endurance, and speed without the associated bulk that can hamper cycling performance.

How did SUF Cycling come about?

It evolved from The Sufferfest, a hugely popular training app for cyclists and triathletes, founded by CEO David McQuillen in 2009. The Sufferfest began as a series of downloadable training videos designed to be used at home in

conjunction with a turbo trainer. The mixture of challenging but effective workouts, officially-licensed footage of pro racing, engaging storylines and amazing soundtracks quickly created a cult following of 'Sufferlandrians'.

Gym and studio owners kept asking how they could use The Sufferfest in group settings, and so the Sufferlandrian Embassy Programme was created. In response to feedback from gym owners, last year we changed the name to SUF Cycling, to be less intimidating.

What does it appeal to? What do they like about it?

One of the great things about SUF Cycling is how it appeals to people from a variety of backgrounds and fitness levels, from avid cyclists training for their next big race, to general fitness enthusiasts looking for a fun way to get fit or lose some weight.



SUF Cycling features real footage from the biggest races in pro cycling

■ KATH HUDSON FIRST PERSON. IT WORKS!



The Sufferfest is undoubtedly effective, but it's more than just a training programme: the Aussie humour and the desire to enter the mythical land of Sufferlandria, and become a true Sufferlandrian, motivate you to train rather than heading to 'Couchlandria' with a doughnut in your hand.

My husband has been an avid Sufferlandrian for a couple of years and when he strictly adheres to a programme he always sees his race performance rise. He likes the Four Dimensional Power test, which assesses power over a range of sprint distances, works out what type of rider you are and adapts the training accordingly.

I became hooked in by default, when I joined in on his 15-minute morning yoga sessions. Last summer, when I set myself the challenge of competing in the Pivot 24:12 24 hour solo mountain bike race, I knew it was going to be my mental state which was key, and turned to the 10-week Sufferfest mental training programme.

Covering everything from goal setting, to staying positive, recovery and "preparing to shred chamois", it was so effective that I've considered using it to achieve other goals outside of sport and exercise.

Hudson's husband is an avid 'Sufferlandrian'



PHOTO: KATH HUDSON

The targeted workouts deliver real benefits that help performance-oriented cyclists take their riding to the next level, while the real race footage and stunning scenery keeps those who are new to indoor cycling engaged and entertained.

What were the challenges to bringing it to fruition?

This isn't a spin around the park: SUF Cycling requires participants to dig deep, which can push some people not used to HIIT out of their comfort zone. The workouts are designed with an optimal balance of work and recovery, which means you'll be asked to push it when you need to, but you also need to be able to go easy during the recoveries, so you can hit the next interval hard.

We also found the original branding of The Sufferfest was a bit intimidating to general fitness enthusiasts. With the shift to SUF Cycling we've softened the image, making it easier to entice those first-timers into taking a class, while still offering the same workouts and benefits. Once they get in there, they're hooked.

What trends in the industry support the concept?

Consumers are more focused on data and quantifying their fitness than ever before. Manufacturers like Wattbike and Stages have made it easier for members to train with power data on the bike, and the popularity of data-driven platforms, like MyZone and Spivi, have helped shift the preference away from generalised indoor cycling classes towards more structured, results-oriented workouts.

We have the best sports scientists in the business designing our workouts, with specific fitness outcomes in mind.

These are the same people who coach Olympic athletes, world champions, and Tour de France contenders, so members are able to see real, measurable improvements over a short amount of time, which they can verify with power data.

How big are you now?

We currently have more than 160 licensed SUF Cycling embassies in 17 countries, with more being added. Virgin Active, David Lloyd Leisure and SNAP Fitness all use the SUF Cycling programme and our consumer app. We believe the Sufferfest, is one of the top three indoor training platforms in the world.

What are your future plans?

We'd like to bring some of the advanced workout personalisation functionality of our consumer app – what we call Four-Dimensional Power – to the studio environment at some point.

We'll be expanding our library of videos to include workout content which goes beyond bike race footage, giving gyms and studios more options to enable them to customise the experience, while still getting the benefit of our structured workouts to offer members.

As well as our normal gym license, we also work with licenses which are design specifically for non-commercial and corporate facilities.



Gyms and studios are using SUF Cycling to engage members

■ TYPICAL RIDER IMPROVEMENTS FROM TWO TO THREE SUF CYCLING SESSIONS PER WEEK:

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- Highest power increase is 23 per cent in 12 weeks



We watch trends closely at Stylist and we've seen a real growth in women strength training as a way of reclaiming a traditionally male space

LISA SMOSARSKI

EDITOR IN CHIEF – STYLIST MAGAZINE



omen's fashion magazine *Stylist* has entered the fitness market by opening a female-only boutique studio in London's affluent Mayfair district.

The studio will be operated under a new lifestyle brand, *Stylist Strong*, which the magazine hopes to develop into a leading women's fitness line.

The *Stylist Strong* studio will specialise in class-based strength training specifically tailored for women. It will also host classes, events, talks and panel discussions on fitness and strength-training.

Classes have been designed to build both physical and mental strength in a "smart and informed way", with trainers having been educated to help women optimise their workouts – from aligning training with their menstrual cycles to taking into account individual lifestyles.

A tailored training programme, created by Nike Global Master Trainer Joslyn Thompson Rule, will also be available.



Lisa Smosarski, editor-in-chief at *Stylist*, said: "We watch trends closely at *Stylist* and we have seen a real growth in women strength training – for body, for mind and as a way of reclaiming a traditionally male space.

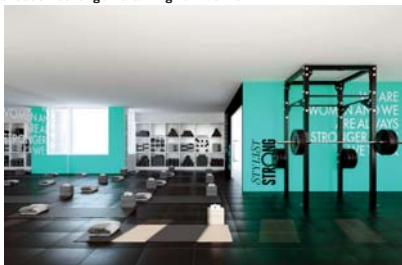
"This trend challenges the idea of exercising for a specific body shape but instead embraces exercise for general health and wellness as well as boosting confidence and mental health."

Master trainer Thompson Rule added: "I am both honoured and incredibly excited to be part of *Stylist Strong*; they have given me a platform to spread my passion – getting women unapologetically stronger.

"Women's training is undergoing a refreshing and much-needed reboot on every level, this is just the beginning.

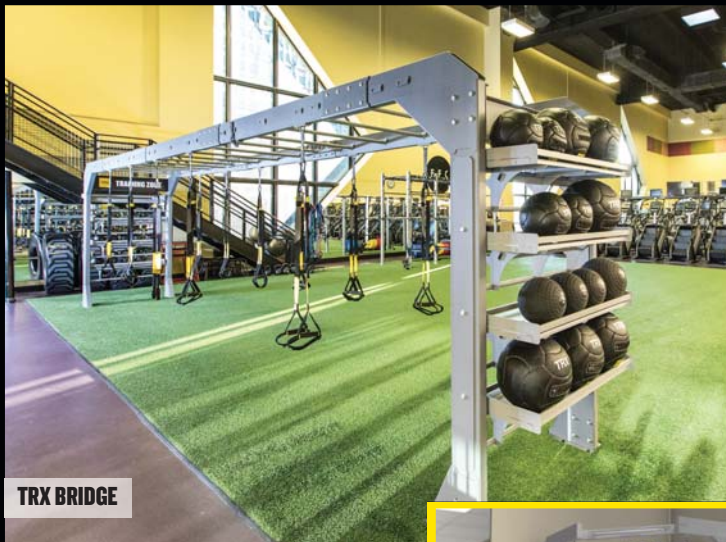
"I spend a lot of my time educating women on the importance of strength training for every aspect of their lives, but the educational piece can still be limited in terms of delivery and there is still a little stigma around lifting weights."

The new *Stylist Strong* studio will specialise in class-based strength training for women



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Xponential Fitness-backed AKT plans 500 new sites by 2021

Dance-based boutique studio operator AKT has revealed ambitious plans to grow its US portfolio from the current 50 sites to 500 by 2021.

AKT, which offers a "hybrid exercise regime" combining

dance with functional training, is backed by Xponential Fitness, whose portfolio of wellness brands includes eight businesses (Pure Barre, Yoga Six, Stride, Club Pilates, CycleBar, StretchLab, Row House and AKT). The plans were announced as AKT signed 10 new franchise agreements across six US states.

Originally developed in New York City by celebrity-trainer Anna Kaiser, the AKT format is based on a combination of four modalities: dance, bands, circuit and tone.

Now headquartered in California, the brand has attracted a range of celebrity influencers, such as popular daytime actress Kelly Ripa and singer Shakira.



AKT was founded by celebrity-trainer Anna Kaiser (right)



“

I want to bring this model to a wider audience

Anna Kaiser

With a strong social media presence, AKT is marketed as a studio experience which gives members the chance to "dance, sweat and get stronger while surrounded by a community".

"I want to bring this model to a wider audience and I'm thrilled to partner with Xponential," said Anna Kaiser.

More: http://lei.sr/z8f8b_H

Les Mills Jr unveils new "future-focused" training programmes

Fitness giant Les Mills has launched three new studio spaces at its iconic Auckland City Gym in New Zealand.

Two of the new spaces have been created to trial and support the launch of new exercise programmes.

The fresh additions include a "highly tactile" functional studio – which will host a newly-developed training workout called Ceremony – and a design-led boxing studio created around the needs of a new boxing conditioning workout called Conquer.

The third new space is an immersive indoor cycling studio – which Les Mills says is the largest of its kind in the



The new programmes include the boxing-based 'Conquer' workout

world – featuring a 100-bike terraced theatre environment. Ceremony is a 45-minute functional training workout with a focus on a whole-body

exercise mixing strength, cardio and conditioning.

The other new programme, Conquer, is a 45-minute boxing conditioning workout.

Les Mills Jr, who led the development of the workouts, said: "We've put an intimate focus on design to create an incredible experience."



“

We've put an intimate focus on design to create an incredible experience

Les Mills Jr

More: http://lei.sr/E6W3f_H

TRIB3 accelerates European expansion with Madrid studio

Boutique fitness operator TRIB3 has opened its second studio in the Spanish capital Madrid.

TRIB3 has developed the site in partnership with Holmes Place Spain and is part of a larger roll-out of the brand across the country.

Josep Viladot, CEO Holmes Place Spain, said: "We're delighted with the launch of our second studio in Madrid, following our flagship studio in Cuzco. We're looking forward to many more stores in the coming months across Spain."

Rod Hill, president of TRIB3, added: "We believe that the Spanish fitness market is well



The Spanish fitness market is well prepared for the boutique mode

Rod Hill

prepared for the boutique model, which is changing the face of the global gym industry. The model works very well as a franchise and typically has a lower



The Madrid opening is the second for TRIB3 in the city

investment requirement than the traditional gym model.

"We've seen the development of the low cost and then the 24-hour convenience concept, but we believe that the boutique model concept is set to explode globally. We have an incredibly experienced Spanish team, all of whom have worked

with the largest fitness chains and franchises in the world and who have a successful track record of developing fitness chains across the globe."

The Spanish expansion follows recent openings of TRIB3 sites in Finnish cities Helsinki and Tampere.

More: http://lei.sr/K7z6f_H

Peloton files for IPO

Indoor cycling giant Peloton has revealed plans to launch an initial public offering (IPO).

The company, which was launched in 2012, has more than 1 million people using its streaming workouts and was valued at around US\$4bn (£3.6bn, £3.2bn) in 2018.

It recently raised US\$550m (£489m, £433m) financing



The number of shares to be offered and the price range for the proposed offering have not yet been determined

Peloton statement

from investors, including Baillie Gifford and Felix Capital and led by TCV, whose interests include entertainment giant Netflix.

In a short statement, Peloton said: "We have confidentially submitted a draft registration statement on Form S-1 with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC"), relating to the proposed initial public offering of our common stock.

"The number of shares to be offered and the price range for the proposed offering have not yet been determined. The initial public offering is expected to commence after the SEC completes its review



More than a million people use Peloton's streaming workouts

process, subject to market and other conditions."

Peloton offers studio-style workouts in the convenience of people's homes. The service streams up to 48 live classes

a day from its New York- and London-based studios and also has a library of thousands of on-demand classes.

More: http://lei.sr/D5x2G_H

Boutique operator SoulCycle opens London studio

US-based indoor cycling operator SoulCycle has opened its first UK location.

Located on Soho's Great Marlborough Street, the boutique studio is the first SoulCycle site to open outside

the US and Canada, where the company currently operates more than 90 sites.

The studio features 63 bikes and will offer 45-minute classes set in a candlelit room to high-energy music.

Founded by fitness



The London studio features 63 indoor cycling bikes

entrepreneurs Elizabeth Cutler and Julie Rice in 2006, the method has become very popular among a host of US celebrities and actors. "We call it a cardio party," the pair say.

"Our riders say it's changing their lives. With every pedal stroke, our minds clear and we connect with our true

and best selves. Through this shared experience, our riders develop an unshakeable bond with one another. Friendships are made and relationships are built. In that dark room, our riders share a Soul experience."

More: http://lei.sr/N3n4P_H



Our riders say SoulCycle is changing their lives

Elizabeth Cutler and Julie Rice



The Gym Group offers free memberships to 'stressed teenagers'

The Gym Group has launched a marketing campaign targeting teenagers who are in the middle of their exam period.

The budget chain has been offering free six-week memberships to 16 to 18-year-olds, with the messaging suggesting joining a gym can help combat stress.

The offer will run until 16 July and will offer teenagers access to the gym during off-peak hours – between 9.30am and 4pm – seven days a week.

In a statement, The Gym



The idea is to offer teenagers the opportunity to clear their heads and energise before and after their exams

The Gym Group



The campaign will offer free, six-week memberships to 16- to 18-year-olds

Group said: "The idea is to offer teenagers the opportunity to clear their heads and energise before and after their exams."

The offer has been made available across the group's 160-strong portfolio of gyms and follows research by the operator, which suggested that 77 per cent of teens feel exams "increased levels of anxiety and stress" – and that 80 per cent believe that exercise helps to overcome feelings of stress and improves confidence.

More: http://lei.sr/h6P9b_H

First location for studio operator mixing boxing and luxury fitness

A boxing club looking to mix authentic boxing training and a boutique fitness experience has launched in London.

With a stated USP of being “steeped in the heritage of the sport of boxing”, Rathbone Boxing Club has set out to deliver the spirit of the traditional, spit-and-sawdust boxing gym – but with the added comforts of a boutique setting. Located on Rathbone Street in the heart of London’s Fitzrovia, the venue has been

kitted out with a boxing ring, punch bags, speedballs, skipping ropes and all the equipment associated with traditional boxing training.

It will also offer a range of classes, workshops and bespoke training delivered by a team of coaches, led by professional boxing trainer Adam Booth.

During his career, Booth has worked with David Haye and Ryan Burnett and has helped curate the class programme



The studio's USP is to offer an experience 'steeped in boxing'

with Rathbone Boxing Club founder Manya Klempner.

“The demand for boxing-based fitness is stronger than ever, but we noticed there is no middle ground – the choices

are either boxing “inspired” studios or traditional, gritty clubs that are full of soul but intimidating,” Klempner said.

More: http://lei.sr/N7U5K_H

Huw Edwards: ‘We need a cultural shift across government’

Huw Edwards, acting CEO of ukactive, has called for a “cultural shift” across government, in order for it to recognise the crucial role that the physical activity sector can play in improving the nation’s health.

Edwards, speaking at the Active Uprising conference in Manchester, said the sector’s

partnership with government needs to see all government departments acknowledge the sector as an important partner – rather than just an “afterthought”.

“Our partnership with government and its institutions has to go beyond

a signed Memorandum of Understanding, investment and a set of agreed objectives,” he said. “This requires a cultural shift across government to show how it values our sector and wants to work with us.

“While progress has been made, regrettably in Whitehall

there are still too many of the same people discussing the same issues, leading to the same lack of change.

“Progress is being made in pockets, but it must be the norm rather than the exception.”

More: http://lei.sr/s4J7Q_H



Progress must be the norm, rather than the exception

Huw Edwards



Edwards called for the government to better utilise the expertise within the fitness sector

Matt Roberts health club opens at luxury hotel The Langley

A vast 1,600sq m (17,222sq ft) wellness hub has debuted at The Langley, a newly-reopened luxury hotel in Buckinghamshire.

Boasting "world-class training systems and equipment", the hub's gym has been developed in partnership with fitness guru Matt Roberts.

The club will offer bespoke one-on-one personal training using custom-made equipment and utilising the estate's extensive grounds.

Further specialist offerings include comprehensive health diagnostics offering 3D-printed figurines to illustrate anatomical changes in detail.

The gym is complemented by a wide range of wellness facilities and anchored by a subterranean luxury spa.

The Langley Spa offers treatments in partnership



We're fully integrating with the spa services

Matt Roberts



The wellness hub includes a gym and subterranean spa

with skincare brand Sisley, facilities including a private VIP suite, vitality pools, hammams and 16-metre marble-lined indoor swimming pool.

"We're offering great programming and we're fully integrating with the spa services," Roberts said.

More: http://lei.sr/u3v3j_H

Mums with young children say exercising makes them 'feel guilty'

A majority of mothers do not exercise because it makes them feel guilty about not spending time with their children.

A Sport England study of 1,006 mothers with young children – aged six or younger – reveals that

61 per cent of mums said exercising made them worry they were neglecting their responsibilities.

On a list of priorities, mums placed cooking and housework ahead of keeping fit.

The survey also showed that a lack of time is keeping

busy mums from exercising, with 30 per cent reporting to have less than an hour free to themselves per day.

Another finding was that nearly 70 per cent of mothers feel it is important for their children to see them exercising. This view is supported by previous Sport England data, which shows that mothers have a greater influence on their children's activity levels than fathers.

According to TV psychologist Emma Kenny, the research sends a strong message to mums with young kids about the importance of self-care.

"You may believe that looking after everyone else's needs is your main priority, but you need to take care of



The best thing about being an active mum is how it translates to kids

Emma Kenny

yourself first and foremost, because that ensures you have the energy to look after those you love," she said.

"The best thing about being a healthy and active mum is how it translates to your kids."

More: http://lei.sr/f4v6Z_H

The study surveyed 1,006 mothers with young children





14
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Revenues up at Third Space as it plans to double size of portfolio

Premium fitness operator Third Space created revenues of £36.8m during 2018 – a 13.7 per cent increase on 2017 figures.

Announcing its results for the year to 31 December 2018, the company revealed that

nearly a third of its revenues (30 per cent) now come from in-club spend – primarily personal training and food. Its boutique studio chain, Another Space, achieved year-on-year revenue growth of 76 per cent.

In a statement, the company said its strong financial performance was driven by membership applications to the new City of London club and increased spend from existing members, driven by its model of larger-footprint clubs resulting in “higher than average revenue per member”.

Third Space also revealed that it will accelerate its expansion plans, with a



30 per cent of Third Space's revenues come from in-club spend

“
Our model is supported by favourable industry trends

Colin Waggett



development pipeline that will double the size of the portfolio by 2024.

“These results demonstrate that health, wellness and experience are the true

currency of our time, and that our model is supported by favourable industry trends,” said CEO Colin Waggett.

More: http://lei.sr/q9z7q_H

White paper: valuing fitness instructors ‘key to success’

Operators who recognise and reward their best instructors are more likely to retain customers, build brand loyalty and see improvements in their financial results.

That is the finding outlined in *The Impact of Instructor*

Quality In The Physical Activity Sector – a white paper produced by fitness giant Les Mills and supported by not-for-profit body ukactive.

The study found that instructors play a major role in clubs, from impacting member

retention to instigating positive changes in operations.

“The sector should not undervalue the role of the instructor,” the report reads.

“Members are often more loyal to their favourite instructor than they are to a facility – and often the soft skills of the instructor are more important to members than knowledge of the industry or a high level of qualifications.”

Instructors are also at the centre of the gym journey more than ever before thanks to the ever-increasing popularity of group exercise.

Wendy Coulson, chief executive of Les Mills UK and Ireland, said: “We know that club members feel



“
Members feel passionately about their instructors and come back to classes because of them

Wendy Coulson

passionately about their fitness instructors and will keep coming back to classes because they feel a strong connection with them.”

More: http://lei.sr/R255b_H

The study found that instructors play a major role in clubs



Study: financial incentive of just US\$2 a day gets people active

More than two thirds (68 per cent) of Americans would devote at least an hour each day to fitness activities if they received a financial incentive of as little as US\$2 (€1.8, £1.5) per day.

The 2019 *UnitedHealthcare Wellness Checkup Survey*, published in June, also reveals that nearly 60 per cent of people would be more likely to participate in fitness sessions that offer an opportunity to socialise or make friends.

The nationwide study examined people's opinions about health topics and

preferences, with the aim of offering insights to help improve employer-sponsored wellbeing programmes.

Worryingly, the study showed that most people underestimate the connection between lifestyle choices and chronic conditions.

Only a fifth (22 per cent) of survey respondents recognised that 80 per cent or more of the incidence of premature chronic conditions – such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes – are generally caused by modifiable lifestyle choices, such as smoking, inactivity and having unhealthy diets.



The survey showed that socialising drives interest in fitness

More than half (53 per cent) of respondents anticipate being able to accomplish everyday activities until 80 or older, including 11 per cent saying tasks will “never” be an issue.

Compiled by health care specialist UnitedHealthcare, the survey was based on a sample of 1,000 US adults.

More: http://lei.sr/h5x9Z_H

Research project to investigate role of exercise in cancer care

Northumbria University (NU) has set out to uncover in detail the important role that structured exercise programmes can play in living with and beyond cancer.

Led by professor John Saxton, head of the Department of Sport, Exercise

& Rehabilitation at NU, the survey will combine a number of research projects – undertaken in collaboration with NHS Foundation Trusts in a number of regions.

One of the studies will be focused on the role exercise plays in reversing adverse body

composition changes – such as increased fat mass and reduced lean body mass – for patients recovering from hormone-receptor positive breast cancer.

Another, large-scale multi-centre trial is investigating how exercise programmes prior to surgery can be used to improve fitness and treatment outcomes in colorectal cancer patients across the UK.

Elsewhere, a study will be used to develop exercise programmes designed to alleviate the side-effects of prostate cancer treatments. “Physical activity and structured exercise have an important role to play in alleviating the impact of cancer and its treatments,” said Professor Saxton.



Exercise can play a role in alleviating the impact of cancer

John Saxton

“Cancer is now considered a chronic condition because more people are living longer after a cancer diagnosis.

“This research is about using exercise to improve the health of people living with cancer.”

More: http://lei.sr/w6m6S_H

The study will involve a number of NHS Foundation Trusts



Events calendar

AUGUST 2019

22-24 | FIBO China

National Exhibition & Convention Centre, Shanghai, China

Fibo China is an international platform that connects China's fitness industry to the international development trend, and accelerate and promote the healthy development of the fitness and leisure industry. HCM magazine is FIBO's Global Media Partner. www.fibo-china.cn

29-31 | IHRSA Fitness Brasil

Transamerica Expo Center, São Paulo, Brazil

The programme is designed for all types and sizes of clubs – from established clubs to those that are just starting out in the industry. The programme provides educational opportunities in a variety of interactive formats: traditional seminars, how-to sessions, and best practice.

www.fitnessbrasil.com.br

SEPTEMBER

11-13 | ISPA Conference & Expo

The Venetian, Las Vegas, NV, USA

Three days of speaker presentations covering a range of topics including business strategy, customer service and management. The Expo floor offers the latest spa products available on the market.

www.experienceispa.com



ISPA brings the spa industry together for three days

23-26 | SIBEC North America

JW Marriott Turnberry Resort & Spa, FL, USA

Major operators in the health, recreation, sports and fitness organisations meet with leading executives from national and international supplier companies.

www.sibecna.com

25 | National Fitness Day

UK-wide

This event sees fitness providers across the UK open their doors for free to allow members of the public to try out a wide range of fitness activities.

www.nationalfitnessday.com



Legend is raising money for Cancer Research UK

Legend to take part in Soapbox Challenge

On Monday 26 August, a team from Legend Club Management Systems will take part in the annual York Micklegate Run Soapbox Challenge. This fun event will see 50 spectacularly decorated carts hurtling down the cobbled street of Micklegate, while around 20,000 spectators cheer them on.

Legend is taking this opportunity to raise desperately needed funds for Cancer Research UK, as many in the company have been touched by this terrible condition.

The team of Legend colleagues are working feverishly in the run-up to the event, engineering the suspension and weight ratios on their trusty Apollo soapbox, in an effort to achieve maximum speed.

On race day, Legend hopes to thrill audiences both young and old, who will line the pavements of York's Micklegate. Legend would appreciate your support for this worthy cause. If you wish to donate please go to:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/legend-club-management-systems1

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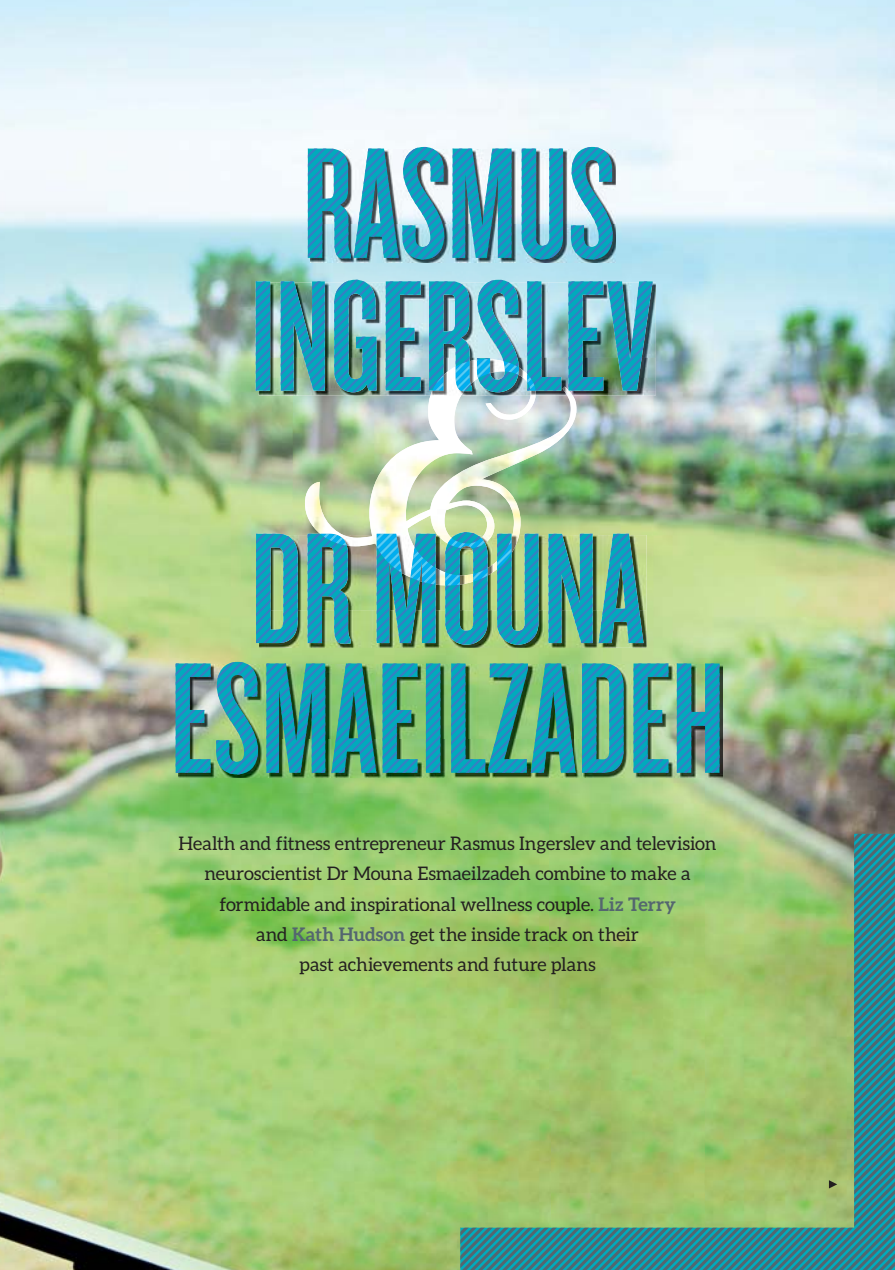
Co-Organizer:



www.fibo-china.cn

*My dream is for our industry
to have a much more
significant impact on global
health; there is still so much
more we can do*

Rasmus Ingerslev



RASMUS INGERSLEV & DR MOUNA ESMAEILZADEH

Health and fitness entrepreneur Rasmus Ingerslev and television neuroscientist Dr Mouna Esmaeilzadeh combine to make a formidable and inspirational wellness couple. **Liz Terry** and **Kath Hudson** get the inside track on their past achievements and future plans

R

asmus Ingerslev has a track record of spotting a niche and blazing a trail. Among his many successes he's created Denmark's first chain of low-cost clubs; built the global virtual fitness technology company, Wexer, and has introduced boutique fitness to Stockholm and Gothenburg with Barry's Bootcamp.

Although this visionary entrepreneurialism has led to him becoming a big hitter in the industry, it hasn't always made for plain sailing – on occasion he's been too far ahead of the curve and has had to wait for the industry to catch up.

Wexer is a case in point. After selling his first company, fitness dk, and leaving altogether in 2008 to pursue his brain wave of creating an online gym, Ingerslev was hit by the global financial crisis and found himself with a company that was ahead of its time.

"I lost 95 per cent of my fitness dk earnings in the crash and was left with a company that wasn't flying," says Ingerslev. "I felt the idea of an online gym overcame many of the reasons why people don't go to gyms – solving all the issues of intimidating environments, lack of time and lack of money. I planned to make it cheap and convenient to exercise at home and fund it by banner advertising, but in 2008 the market wasn't quite ready for this concept."

NEVER GIVE UP

The chips might have been down, but Ingerslev's resolve and dogged persistence – honed through years of competitive karate at elite level in Denmark – were undiminished.

"I never give up! It's not how many times you fall, it's how many times you get up that is important," he says. "What I learned from karate, that I've been able to take into business, is that you need to be a humble and likeable person, so that people will invest in you, either with their time, their advice or their money. I lost my money, but I knew I hadn't lost the knowledge I had gathered making that money, so I could use the knowledge to make the money again."

Four years of working without a salary followed, while Ingerslev threw himself into the creation of two businesses. Knowing that Wexer was a good concept that would work one day, he kept it bubbling along. And, being a health club operator at heart, he launched his second chain of clubs.

"I'm part of a round table group of industry professionals who meet up quarterly and discuss new concepts, and a few of them were getting into low cost



Above and left: Ingerslev started his online gym concept in 2008. Despite being slow to take off, the company now works with 17 of the top 25 global health and fitness groups



*I never give up!
It's not how many
times you fall, it's
how many times
you get up
that is important*

Rasmus Ingerslev

Ingerslev has always had a passion for health and fitness, and has dedicated his life to helping nurture this passion in others



We have replicated the nightclub and restaurant environments that 22- to 35-year-olds like to hang out in

Rasmus Ingerslev

► gyms," he says. "I identified a gap in the market in Denmark and created Fresh Fitness in 2010."

Fresh Fitness had the right timing: the concept worked and by 2014 the chain had grown to 22 clubs and 75,000 members. At this point, Ingerslev's life was looking very different. Wexer had also taken off, so he had two thriving businesses, he had married Mouna Esmailzadeh and their first child, Isabel, was born.

Applying the same commitment to fatherhood as he does to his work, Ingerslev opted to dial back his business interests to spend time with his daughter. He sold Fresh Fitness to Fitness World and recruited Paul Bowman as CEO of Wexer, stepping back to executive vice chair. Now 11 years old, Wexer continues to grow: it has offices in Denmark, Amsterdam, New York and London and 4,000 installations in around 60 countries, working with 18 of the top 25 global health and fitness groups.

THE THIRD CHAIN

While fatherhood was wonderful, Ingerslev soon found he missed being a health club operator. It was time to call up some old colleagues and start a new chain.

This time round, he spotted a niche for an

urban millennial brand. This was the birth of Repeat. It now has four clubs in Denmark and one in Sweden, with further expansion on the cards for this year. "I'm always building clubs, it's my true passion," he says. "I called it Repeat because it was the third time I had built a chain and because workouts are based on repetitions. We have replicated the nightclub and restaurant environments that 22- to 35-year-olds like to hang out in."

With two health and fitness businesses already on the go, Ingerslev then came across Barry's Bootcamp on a round table trip to Miami. Immediately hooked, he invested to become the master franchisor for Denmark, Sweden and Finland, seeing potential for 10 to 15 clubs across the three countries. The first two have now launched in Sweden.

"Barry's Bootcamp is doing really well in Stockholm, which is home to a lot of ex-pats and people who travel and know the concept, but it has taken longer to gain traction in Gothenburg," he says. "No brand exists in suburbia – it's hard to be the trail blazer, as you have to do the education. Boutiques are still a big city phenomenon, where they fly from day one, but the return on investment is ►



Ingerslev is the master franchisor for Barry's Bootcamp in Denmark, Sweden and Finland, and says he sees potential for 10 to 15 clubs across the three countries

People think
we live in terrible
times, but actually
the world has
never been in
a better state

Dr Mouna Esmaeilzadeh



Dr Mouna Esmaeilzadeh has degrees in both medicine and philosophy and is currently setting up a new company, which aims to be an antidote to the current environment of fake news and clickbait

► very different in secondary cities, where it takes 12 to 24 months to establish boutiques."

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Added to these commitments, Ingerslev has also recently become involved with two more companies, which approached him for his expertise. One is Playbook, an inspirational tool that allows people to follow the workouts of celebrities and PTs.

The second, which Ingerslev is very enthusiastic about, is Lenus: an ehealth company allowing PTs and dieticians to create intelligent diet plans, based on a detailed questionnaire. The technology allows the PTs to take on many more clients than if they worked out the diet plans manually, and they also get the lion's share of the fee.

"The software does most of the legwork, leaving the PTs to do the tweaks and customer interaction," says Ingerslev. "For the end user, it's a way of helping them reach their goals. Many people work really hard in the gym without seeing the full benefits, because they don't realise that half the battle is won in the kitchen."

Ingerslev predicts technology will continue to be a defining force, which the health and fitness industry should embrace: "My dream is for our industry to have a much more significant impact on global health; there is still so much more we can do to offer a better

service – to attract and retain more people, and to enable them to workout anywhere.

"What we supply should be like a piece of Lego – where the service the club is offering can easily connect to another service or system. This requires a shift in the mentality for both clubs and IT providers, to have open systems so they can be easily integrated and allow the member to personalise their fitness experience. Trying to own the information and the entire customer journey does not offer the best experience to the consumer."

DR MOUNA'S POPULAR SCIENCE

Early adoption of technology has also been a defining factor in Esmaeilzadeh's career. With degrees in both medicine and philosophy, she has spent her working years at the cutting edge of medicine. Prior to relocating to Spain in 2018, she ran a medical clinic in Stockholm, which used the latest technology and scientific methods to predict, and avoid, disease.

Following the sale of her clinic and the family's relocation, Esmaeilzadeh's work now revolves around her speaking engagements and board work. She has a regular slot on Swedish television, with the programme *Popular Science with Dr Mouna*, and also sits on a mind and wellbeing panel. On top of this, she's about to take up board positions with two global med tech companies.

Prior to our interview, Esmailzadeh had just addressed a conference at the O2 Arena in London, discussing Future Hope. This is the formative idea of the new company she's in the process of setting up, which aims to be an antidote to our fake news and clickbait-dominated world.

SPREADING HOPE

"People think we live in terrible times, but actually the world has never been in a better state," she says. "There are fewer starving children than there have ever been and within 30 years starvation won't exist. In the last 200 years we have seen a massive reduction in poverty and doubled our life expectancy. In the last 25 years we've seen cancer mortality decrease by 25 per cent.

"But all this is nothing compared to what could happen in the near future. We have so many opportunities open to us. Scientific developments are moving so fast and we're becoming so empowered, that there will be so many opportunities for good. People should really not be feeling afraid."

Esmailzadeh concedes that changing peoples' mindsets is not an easy task, because the people she is targeting are not aware they even have a problem: "Media consumption has changed massively. People used to get their news from the media, which was written based on facts. Now people tend to get their news from social media, which is full of click bait, filter bubbles and fake news and frequently leads to populism, hatred and a cynical world view. Without realising it, people become caught in a bubble. We may not be able to burst their bubble, but we can at least try to expand it."

Full details of the project are still under wraps, but Esmailzadeh will use engaging content, infotainment, social media channels and celebrities to get her positive messages across: "I want to use science to dispel the myths, and spread hope by democratising facts and knowledge. Scientists make science boring – we need to make it sexy, so the brain's reward system seeks more! My challenge is to make science more interesting than Kim Kardashian's backside!"

CHANGING MINDSETS

A refugee from Iran, Esmailzadeh's family fled the regime when she was three and settled in Sweden, an opportunity for which she is eternally grateful. She says she doesn't want her children to grow up in a world full of hatred, and believes hatred comes through fear and not having the correct facts: "Hatred comes from ignorance, so without fear people tend to be kinder. I believe we can create hope for the future through increased knowledge based on scientific facts.




People generally want to do good things, they just need the tools to be able to do so and to be empowered. It's important for people to feel they can be part of making the world a better place."

Esmailzadeh says we need a brain upgrade, which we can achieve by learning to question our perceptions, thoughts and assumptions, rather than unquestioningly going with our first impulses. "It's in our make up to be drawn to negativity," she explains. "Our brains have not developed much in 50,000 years: we're still very much like a caveman, and wired to look for threats and dangers. While it served the caveman well to be on the lookout for a lion, rather than admiring a sunrise, we're not in that situation anymore."

Looking at the sunrise is a very good place for this brain rewiring process to start: what better hope for the future than a new dawn?

Esmailzadeh and Ingerslev start each day by appreciating the spectacular sunrise from their hilltop villa in Marbella and despite all their achievements – and the opportunities their work has given to others – they say it's the grounding aspects of nature, love and family they hold most dear. ●

Ingerslev and Esmailzadeh are both committed to having a significant and positive impact on global health. They can be followed at [@doctormouna](#) and [@ringerslev](#)



EMS training is perfect for PTs who want to maximise the use of their time

MAXIMISING POTENTIAL

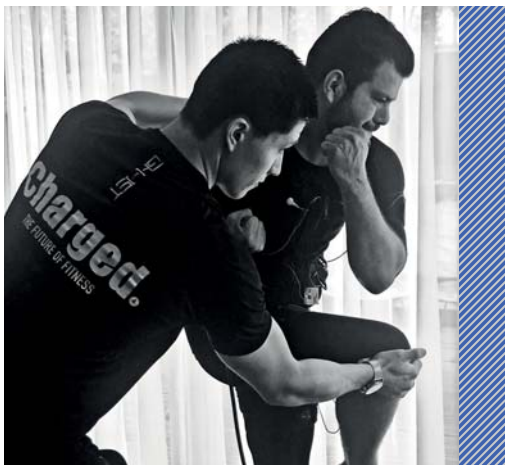
Technology is shaping the way we do fitness. Personal trainers seek the latest innovations to elevate their business services. Electro-muscle stimulation (EMS) takes fitness technology to a whole new level, using the best of technology to ensure faster results compared to any other workout

Electro-muscle stimulation (EMS) takes fitness technology to a whole new level, using the best of technology to ensure faster results compared to any other workout.

Already huge in Germany, the most forward-thinking, UK-based personal trainers are recognising the power of EMS for developing their business and attracting clients with a workout technique they've never experienced before.

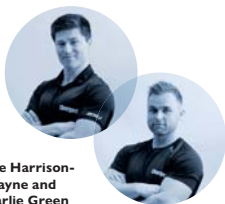
At only 20 minutes a session, EMS is the perfect solution for personal trainers keen to maximise their time and create an efficient work schedule. EMS lends itself to several business models, including mobile PT services, boutique studios and franchising opportunities. PT services currently make up the largest proportion of this offering, as trainers take advantage of the mobile nature of the device. This allows them to target those without a gym membership and those who prefer to work out in the comfort of their own home, keeping overheads and rent at a minimum.

We spoke to several personal trainers using the miha bodytec EMS device to train their clients to understand more about their business models and the success they're having with the equipment.





The founders of Charged Fitness say their business is growing rapidly, thanks to the results that EMS brings



Jamie Harrison-Payne and Charlie Green

"Our approach is all about bringing simplicity to people. The majority of our clients are business men and women who don't have the time to commit to a gym membership, so a 20-minute session in the comfort of their own home works perfectly"

Jamie Harrison-Payne

CHARGED FITNESS

Jamie Harrison-Payne and Charlie Green have seen great success with their mobile EMS PT service, Charged Fitness, since starting up the brand in 2017.

Charged Fitness makes training as easy, accessible and efficient as possible. Jamie and Charlie travel to 20 clients' homes a week – including a number of celebrities – conducting bespoke EMS workouts using the miha bodytec device. They were able to see a full return on their initial investment on two devices in just 12 months.

"Our approach is all about bringing simplicity to people, helping them to reach their goals as efficiently as possible. The majority of our clients are business men and women who don't have the time to commit to a gym membership, so a 30-minute session in the comfort of their own home works perfectly – 20 minutes of EMS, 10 minutes of recovery and stretching," Jamie explains.

"EMS is zero impact, which has also allowed us to work with individuals who struggle with normal gym exercises because they are cautious about returning injuries. We've found that a number of our clients work harder and get better results than they ever did with a traditional PT. This is because we can set the level of stimulation, rather than relying on their personal motivation to complete the exercises at a high enough intensity. It means we guarantee faster results and keep them coming back week on week. The business is growing rapidly, so much so that we are looking to hire additional trainers, as well as considering the opportunity to rent a studio space to expand further."



EMS technology provides a low-impact, efficient way to work out

► ALEX PARKER, PERSONAL TRAINER



Alex Parker, personal trainer at Pure Gym South Kensington, recently started training his clients – including some famous faces – using EMS. In only a month, he has managed to build up a substantial client base, which he expects to bring in a return on investment in as little as six months. Alex uses the device with his clients on the gym floor and has received a lot of interest from onlookers.

"Since trialling an EMS session a few years ago, I have kept it in the back of my mind, knowing it had great potential for helping to build my business portfolio and give me a USP. Consumers are interested in the role technology can play in their fitness more than ever before, so now really is the perfect time to bring EMS to the masses," says Alex.

"Over the past month, I've transitioned a number of my clients from a normal PT session onto EMS and they never want to go back. It's also convenient for me as I am able to fit more sessions into my day for the same price as a sixty-minute PT session. It's the perfect service for helping to bring in more revenue. In time, I hope to buy a second device and look to hire another couple of trainers to run their own EMS sessions under a franchised business."

IT'S TIME TO STAND OUT

With only one in seven UK citizens holding a gym membership, EMS really is the perfect solution to help trainers stand out and appeal to a nation that is calling out for a different way to keep active.

This, coupled with the increasing interest in fitness technology, means the opportunity for personal trainers to succeed with EMS is huge. With retention rates for EMS sitting at more than 85 per cent, there's never been a better time to get on board.

LOUISE MARGOLIN, PERSONAL TRAINER



Louise Margolin is a freelance EMS trainer, offering sessions from Churchill House studio in Hendon and her own home. Louise began as a mobile EMS PT four years ago and her service grew quickly through word of mouth. Offering EMS alongside her co-workers Monika and Tibor Kolb from a rented studio space in Hendon and from her home, Louise dedicates up to 60 minutes of her time to each client, allowing them to choose how much they want to use of that hour, based on their availability. Louise's holistic approach to fitness has encouraged 20 regular clients to attend weekly EMS sessions, on top of those who see her on a more goal-orientated basis.

"I have always enjoyed exercise and keeping in shape, but never felt comfortable or liked to spend hours in the gym. That's why as soon as I found EMS I knew it was the perfect workout for me and the results spoke for themselves. As soon as I introduced EMS to my clients, they felt the same way. My clients love the one-on-one nature of the training, the fact that it's only 20 minutes and the fast results. They achieve their goals and consistently push themselves further each week. I've reached a client base that no gym is managing to touch," says Louise. "I really do believe EMS is the future of fitness and am looking forward to helping build awareness of its benefits and what a great workout it is."

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GET FUNDED

Alicia Whitlecroft from Deloitte asks if the UK boutique health and fitness sector is capable of attracting the funding it needs

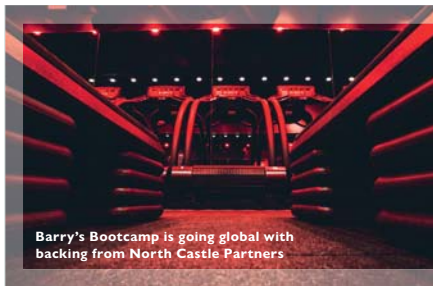
The UK health and fitness industry has developed and evolved rapidly over the last 35 years into a relatively mature yet still attractive, growing market. The Leisure Database Company published 'The 2019 State of the UK Fitness Industry Report' in May 2019, which estimated that the fitness market is valued at £5.1bn, an increase of 4.2 per cent on 2018. Moreover, it projects a compound annual growth rate of c.8.5 per cent in value and c.5.0 per cent in the number of gyms and health clubs over the next five years.

However, this is an industry faced with the need to make constant advances in product and delivery, as the customers continue to become more educated and aware of the benefits of different types of exercise on both physical and mental health.

Over the last 10 years the main disruption in the UK has been the strong growth of the budget operators, but more recently another storm has hit the industry – in the form of the boutique fitness operators. The development of the boutique sector is potentially much more diverse in its impact than the growth of the budget operators. It is also much more challenging from a funding perspective with the need for specialisation and sustainable differentiation being more important than scale. The following article considers how this sector can attract the necessary funding to make a real impact on the structure of the industry.

WHAT IS A BOUTIQUE OPERATOR?

There are three underlying elements that can be used to define a boutique business; a focus on a clearly defined (specialist) product, flexible and/or bespoke delivery



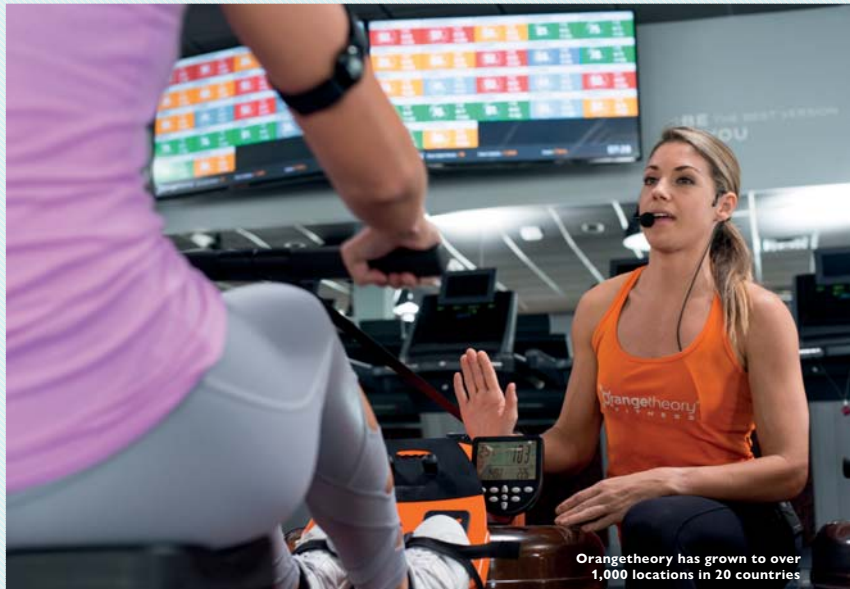
Barry's Bootcamp is going global with backing from North Castle Partners

of the product and an underlying desire to create a community amongst its customers.

The focus is often on both a style of exercise and also the way in which it is delivered. Some sub-sectors are more developed, such as cycling, and some players, such as Barry's Bootcamp, are already well on the way to achieving a strong international footprint.

People enjoy the flexibility of boutique classes without having to be tied into a gym membership. Furthermore, with gym memberships it is very easy to find an excuse to go tomorrow, whereas with a class-based product, you book a class at a time and frequency to suit you, making you much more likely to attend, leading to increased commitment and consistency of training.

Another significant differentiator of boutique fitness



Orangetheory has grown to over 1,000 locations in 20 countries

studios is that they are able to better offer a sense of community. Given the studios are small with a specific timetable of classes, the staff and customers become familiar with each other. This makes the exercise experience more enjoyable and customers are able to identify with the brand, which in itself is a powerful growth tool. The creation of this community spirit further fuels customer's appetites to attend a workout class at their favourite boutique studio and in turn this helps to build customer retention.

CUSTOMERS

It would appear that the millennial and generation Z demographics are the drivers behind this new type of exercise; young fitness enthusiasts who view health and fitness as a way of life. They are willing to pay more for a class that is tailored to their specific goals, that is more fun and engaging compared to just a routine gym workout, and for sessions that tend to specialise in one type of exercise with smaller class numbers.

Interestingly, a large portion of customers at boutique fitness classes are women. The Global Boutique Trends Report 2018 found that women made up 83 per cent of classes booked in London. This gender divide is similar in both New York and Los Angeles where women made up 83 and 81 per cent of bookings respectively.

US SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

The US boutique fitness sector already has some large players such as Barry's Bootcamp; a brand launched in LA in 1998 which has financial backing from North Castle Partners. After 11 years of operating solely in

LA this brand is now developing into a global business with studios across the US and franchises in other major cities around the world. It now has over 50 sites in 9 countries, the latest one being in Australia.

Orangetheory has grown even quicker through franchising, starting in 2010 and now has around 1,000 worldwide units in roughly 20 different countries. Orangetheory has all the typical characteristics of a boutique, its differential niche is the use of heart rate monitors worn by each customer with the objective of working in specific heart rate zones to ensure maximum calorie and fat burning based on scientific knowledge. Throughout the workout all participant's outputs (heart rate, calories burned etc) are displayed on a main screen in the studio – this helps to drive motivation and competition, maximises output from customers and is another component of the community spirit. The idea of having a differentiated selling point is key for companies trying to gain traction and succeed in this highly competitive industry. ▶

"L Catterton, an established institutional investor with a focus on growing consumer brands, has been very active in the sector. Investments (past and present) include Peleton, Flywheel, Pure Barre and CorePower Yoga"



Xponential Fitness is rolling out a range of franchise options including Cyclebar and Pure Barre (below)

- Xponential Fitness on the other hand is a group of boutique fitness brands from across the major categories of boutique fitness (pilates, barre, cycling, rowing, yoga, stretch and dance). The brands are run via franchise models with studios in close proximity to each other, which helps to drive the cross brand offering, however the brands are run independently and do not have shared central services.

Xponential Fitness had much of its initial growth supported by financing from TPG Partners since CEO Anthony Geisler sold Club Pilates to TPG after growing it from 80 to 475 franchise territories. Geisler and his business partner Mark Grabowski (an ex TPG partner) have since bought Xponential Fitness back from TPG Partners.

L Catterton, an established institutional investor with a focus on growing consumer brands, has been very active in the sector. Investments (both past and present) include Peloton, Flywheel, Pure Barre and CorePower Yoga. L Catterton also invests in health and beauty products such as Bliss and in related areas such as healthy food. All of these subsectors have positive market dynamics and there is some convergence as companies look to become more holistic in their approach.

The boutique fitness market has not quite reached IPO level yet; SoulCycle previously filed for an IPO but has decided against it for now. However, this is something we could expect to see in the near future from some of the larger operators who have had significant success to date.

However, the US does already appear to be a little crowded in some geographies. For example, New York has numerous brands of fitness studios, e.g. the cycle studio space has the likes of SoulCycle, Flywheel, Peloton, Revolve, Crank, Swerve, Cyc, Synstudio and so on.

By comparison, London, a city with a similar population size to New York, has a much smaller





Operators like Psycle have great concepts and rapidly growing customer bases

number of boutique fitness studios, with many operators only having a handful of studios, suggesting there remains significant opportunity in the UK, as well as Europe, where there aren't as many boutique fitness concepts established as yet and the roll out of existing brands has been on a smaller scale.

INSTITUTIONAL FUNDING AND OTHER SOURCES (UK)

Many expect the UK to follow in the footsteps of the US, as it has in other sectors, so we could expect to see increased levels of investment in the coming years. There are a lot of smaller UK boutiques out there with great concepts and rapidly growing customer bases such as TRIB3, Core Collective, KoBox, Psycle, BLOK, Flying Fantastic etc, so there are plenty of opportunities for financial investors either on a single brand basis or through building a brand portfolio.

To date there have been a number of successful capital raises from a wide range of sources including:

Crowdfunding – (eg. Crowd Cube, Seedrs)

this can be an excellent way of proving out an initial concept before approaching the institutional investors to create scale. Crowdfunding can also assist with marketing and establishing a loyal core of advocates for the brand.

Network funding – (eg. Wealth Club, Codex Capital) there are a number of financial advisors who have an established network of high net worth investors and will help companies present their ideas to this network in order to raise funds. This tends to be second or third round funding, where there is some proof of concept.


Family funds – this sector is becoming more and more active and increasingly structured in its approach as high net worth families look to more independently manage their money. Those who have made money in the health, wellbeing and fitness markets are usually more inclined to invest where they feel they have an edge.

Institutional funds – (eg. NVM, Piper) – increasing interest from this financial community will enable more scale businesses to be built. These institutions typically raise 10 year funds, the benefit of this being that the money is already raised and follow-on capital can be agreed at the board level (as achieved at Gymbox – see table on page 79). Typically these funds would look to invest in businesses with more than £1m EBITDA.

ACCESSING CAPITAL

In boutique sectors it can be harder to attract interest from institutions because of concerns over scale, competition and 'keyman' dependency. In approaching the institutional funders and family funds, businesses

"The boutique fitness market has not quite reached IPO level yet; SoulCycle previously filed for an IPO but withdrew and Flywheel considered an IPO but has decided against it for now. But this is something we could expect to see in the near future from some of the larger operators who have had significant success to date"



Gymbox drew investment from Octopus and BGF

JON PAIN PHOTO

- should focus on being able to answer the following common challenges from investors:

■ **Over the medium term is it possible to create a scale business?**

Institutional investors like to invest in companies that have the potential to continue growing for 10+ years, as this makes it easier to recapitalise the business. For specialists this can be a challenge as the product may have a limited market. As well as creating an effective roll-out model, brands can consider merchandising, franchising, tie-ups with mass market brands, etc. to provide a range of growth levers.

■ **Does the model work outside London?**

The majority of UK expansion is likely to be within metropolitan areas, with a large portion of the UK's current boutique fitness studios being in and around London. Some have expanded outside the capital,

including Barry's Bootcamp, which recently opened a site in Manchester, and F45 (a company offering 45 minute high-intensity, circuit training workout classes) which has several franchised locations around the UK including Birmingham, Brighton, Chelmsford, Harrogate and Reading, with many more opening soon. So no doubt other companies contemplating national expansion will be keeping a close eye on how these studios perform compared to their London counterparts.

■ **Can the differentiation be sustained?**

Many industry experts believe there is an increasing pool of additional customers alongside the existing fitness industry as millennials place a greater importance on their fitness than previous generations. Appealing to these more 'intense' users of health and fitness should be expanding the market. However, with sometimes relatively low barriers to enter and also existing mainstream players who already have the footprint to exploit new concepts, the investors will need to be convinced the growth plan is sustainable.

■ **'Keyman' dependency**

Not a challenge for the more tech-driven products but where the customer experience is largely governed by the people delivering the training, replicating this as a business gets larger can be a major challenge.

CONCLUSIONS

One thing is for sure, as more competition comes along in the form of both new concepts as well as new sites for existing companies, the quality of the studios and the classes available will need to be the best in the market in order to succeed. ►

"The US already appears to be a little crowded in some geographies. In New York, the cycle studio space has the likes of SoulCycle, Flywheel, Peloton, Revolve, Crank, Sverve, Cyc, Syncstudio and so on and by comparison, London, a city with a similar population size, has a much smaller number of boutiques, suggesting there remains significant opportunity in the UK, as well as Europe"

TABLE 1: INVESTMENTS RAISED

COMPANY	SOURCES	DATES	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
1REBEL	Crowd Cube x 2 Codex Capital	2015 to 2017	£1.5m + £2.9m from Crowd Cube and £6.6m from Codex Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong industry management team achieved more than target on two rounds of crowd funding ● £300k investment from one of the founders of Pure Gym as part of the crowdfunding ● Round three was raised by a network funder
BLOK	Crowd Cube	2018	£892,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raised c.20% over target with an implied company valuation of £9.5m on the back of the 2 initial sites which made £148k EBITDA in 2017
CORE COLLECTIVE	Seedrs	2017 & 2019	£2.06m + £0.7m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Raised two rounds of funding through Seedrs ● First round target of £1.125m for 15.79% equity based on an EV of £6m in 2017 ● Second round target of £0.5m for 5.88% equity based on an EV of £8m in 2019
GYMBOX	Fitness First Octopus BGF	2002 to 2016	£2m (FF) £1.3m £10m + £13m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Started with trade backing (FF) who then sold it back to management as part of the preparation for a float ● Initial and follow-on investment from BGF since 2014
DIGME	Private / EIS private offers - Wealth Club	2016 to 2019	£3.3m + £1.9m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After funding the initial sites privately the Spin and HIT specialist raised £3.3m in EIS funding through Wealth Club (a platform that provides opportunities for its 18,000 members) in February 2018 ● Recently closed the fund raising for its second tranche through the same route, raising £1.9m
CLIMBING HANGAR	NVM	August 2018	£3m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Founded in Liverpool in 2011 CH secured £3m investment from NVM (with three trading sites) in 2018 to fund further roll-out nationally and diversification into gyms, yoga and other specialist classes
FRAME	Piper	October 2017	£6m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Having established four sites between 2009 and 2017 the founders of Frame secured £6m investment from a private equity fund (Piper) ● Piper specialises in consumer brands and has invested in healthy eating (Mindful Chef, Proper Corn)
BOOM CYCLE	Private, Pembroke VCT, Crowd Cube	2011 to 2018	£4.1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Founder Gilbert partnered with entrepreneur Robert Rowland and launched the company's first studio in 2011 ● First round of investment was from a group of angel investors ● Second round included: Pembroke VCT plc (a specialist fund founded by entrepreneur Peter Dubens), hedge fund manager Pierre Andurand and Nectar Capital ● Recently raised further money on Crowd Cube £805,260 against a goal £750,00



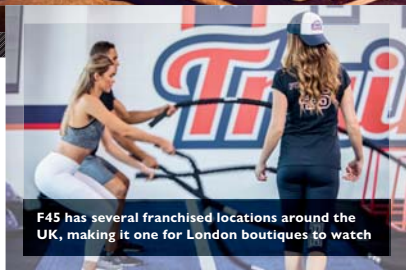
TRIB3 is an example of a UK boutique brand that is expanding into Europe

- More mature consumer sectors have a long history of creating new boutique products and we expect the health and fitness sector to continue to throw up new and interesting alternatives to the mainstream. This is a market that has seen rapid growth and will continue to prosper as individuals become more focused on their health and fitness and the different ways to train. If this is the case it becomes a question of consumer preference, which training methods are most favourable and if there is the same level of appetite outside the major cities. These factors will help define which boutiques are successful and can grow significant market share.

There is a lot of growth still to come in this sector, from both new emerging concepts as well as existing concepts taking advantage of the ever increasing empty retail spaces on the high street and expanding into new studios across the country. Private Equity is well placed to support this growth and make the most of an industry that is set to continue to grow as health and fitness becomes a more integral part of consumers' lives.

Moreover, this growth isn't just in the fitness space, the increasing focus on 'wellness' is extending to nutrition, supplements, clothing and more. Investors have been active in this segment of the market including Lion Capital's investment in the sports nutrition company Grenade, Piper's investment in Proper Snacks and Pembroke VCT's investment in Plenish Cleanse, and there are plenty more nutrition or healthy snacking based companies out there such as Fulfil Nutrition, Eat Natural, Pip & Nut, Rude Health, Pure&Co and many more. Boutiques are well placed to benefit from partnerships with businesses from these other sectors, who are keen to build on the strong customer loyalties experienced in the boutique fitness market.

Additionally, there is a big opportunity for boutiques, as well as their financial investors, to work alongside health organisations, insurance companies, etc., and provide evidence-based fitness programmes to their



F45 has several franchised locations around the UK, making it one for London boutiques to watch

customers as part of a wider integrated health and wellness programme. By aligning themselves with these types of organisations, boutique brands will gain further exposure to different markets, such as healthcare, and by doing so will cement themselves in the industry as a key player and one that is responsible and sustainable, whilst no doubt a partnership like this would have a significant impact on their growth trajectory.

Overall, the UK boutique fitness market is an exciting space to be with lots more opportunity and growth still to come. With many appealing investment characteristics we believe it is only a matter of time before private equity and other financial investors take a real plunge into this market. ●

Alicia Whistlecroft is a manager in Deloitte's M&A Advisory Corporate Finance Department. She sits in its Travel, Hospitality and Leisure sector team and is a keen fitness enthusiast.

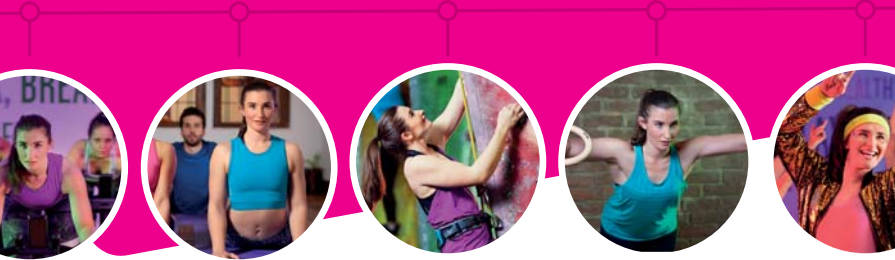


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THE MIDDLE MAN

Many industries have aggregators so it makes sense for the health and fitness industry to have them too. Are they a force for the good, or could it become a case of the tail wagging the dog? **Kath Hudson** reports

The aggregator issue led to a spirited debate at the Active Uprising conference, indicating that there are grievances and mistrust on both sides. There are a few different types of aggregator, and any operator looking to engage should do their research to find the right fit. Companies like Rig and ClassPass mainly give studio/boutique customers the option of accessing multiple studios, while Huddle (formerly Payasugym) sells consumers monthly memberships and pays gyms per visit. Gympass has a similar model, but sells to corporates. MoveGB lists services for free and encourages people to become members.

As well as offering consumer choice, aggregators give operators wider reach, data and the opportunity to sell unsold slots. It should be possible to achieve a win-win, but some operators say they have been bullied by aggregators, who promise one thing when onboarding them and further down the line demand exclusivity and/or higher commissions, otherwise they will withdraw their support. This is a massive deal for an independent boutique and could lead them to going out of business, which doesn't benefit anyone.

PureGym's CEO, Humphrey Cobbold, believes that aggregators disrupt, and endanger, the traditional gym model, which has been built on monthly memberships. He says that if they are allowed to gain a position of power, they can demand more commission and set pricing, which ultimately will be to the cost of consumers, resulting either in higher memberships or inferior facilities.

Huddle's Neil Harmsworth argues aggregators are great for consumers and it is only the budget gyms that are resistant to them, as they "have built market-leading positions by cannibalising full-service




From left: Humphrey Cobbold, Leigh Phillipson, Sam Harney and Chris Heron debated the issue at Active Uprising

operators and putting downward pressure on industry price points and margins."

Many other industries do have aggregators – which we can learn from – but they are different. The travel and property industries aren't trying to build customer loyalty or inspire behaviour change in the way the health and fitness sector is. Our industry has the lofty ambition to get people active and moving, which is different to booking a flight – this makes it less cut throat and instead calls for co-operation.

The middle man/woman is definitely present in the industry, so what is the best way forward to ensure that everyone wins? We ask the experts...



**Operators must not become
reliant on aggregators,
says Puregym's CEO**



If an operator is going to engage, there are some golden rules: remain in control, think about the future not just the present, never sign long term or exclusive deals and monitor the situation very, very carefully

HUMPHREY COBBOLD

PureGym: CEO

As an industry, we need to ensure we do not sleep walk into a situation where we become over reliant on aggregators, because if they are allowed to get too powerful they will control pricing. This is exactly what has happened with Booking.com, for hotels, and Rightmove, for estate agents. In the Polish health and fitness market this has already happened with Benefit Systems, which provides operators with 50 per cent of their members and has forged a position where it controls the market.

If we allow aggregators to become this dominant in the UK health and fitness market, they will inevitably increase their margins at the expense of the operators' margins, and the operator will struggle to say no to accepting a lower price per visit.

Aggregators claim they are good for consumers, since they are driving incremental joiners/members and help the industry to increase access and

reduce marketing costs. In less penetrated markets this may be true, such as Brazil or Spain, but independent, fact-based analysis in the UK and other markets suggests the modest benefits aggregators may bring are much lower than the cost to the operator.

Two of the major aggregators have each raised around US\$500m. I have worked with some of the Silicon Valley providers of that capital and I know they will be asking these aggregator platforms to try to get positions of strength and pricing power in this market. The only viable way they can make a return on the huge investment is by trying to extract profits currently earned by the hard graft and capital investment of operators.

If an operator is going to engage, there are some golden rules: remain in control, think about the future not just the present, never sign long term or exclusive deals and monitor the situation very, very carefully. Operators must learn how to use aggregators to drive reach and trial, but to avoid being so reliant on them that they can dictate terms.

This means retaining control of the inventory released to aggregators – for example, only one place in peak classes, and using aggregators to fill off-peak classes. Direct customers should be rewarded.

When approaching an agreement with an aggregator, my recommendation would be to only trial a small number of gyms, not the whole business. Do not accept incentive payments or guarantees to sign up for long periods of time – make sure you can exit on three months' notice. Measure the true underlying incremental performance very carefully. Above all, never let an aggregator control a material chunk of your members.

If the right decisions are taken, we will have a situation whereby the aggregators work for and service the industry, not the other way round. Going forward, I would not rule out a situation in which an industry-owned "cooperative" aggregator is created which provides benefits to consumers but ensures the industry business model can be sustained for the good of all in the long run. ▶



Lloyd says aggregators are helping to defeat inactivity



In order to achieve a win-win situation, it must be recognised that one size doesn't fit all and operators shouldn't believe an intermediary that suggests otherwise

EAMON LLOYD

Gympass: director of partnerships

The increasing number of operators partnering with third parties to grow shows how these types of business models can expand the industry in terms of both members and revenue. Gympass is an exclusively B2B model: companies investing in the health of their employees are turning to us to make introductions to the right facility partners.

Our deeper relationship with a niche group of employers means we can match their needs nicely to local operator partners' facilities, driving a significant penetration far beyond the traditional corporate wellness model. On average, 80 per cent of the members we send to our partners are new and we are helping to defeat inactivity by offering our corporate clients a variety of activities and facilities.

To avoid any pitfalls, we ensure operators approach the partnership carefully by answering the hard questions early on, taking time to get the deal right and knowing what success looks like for both parties. We urge operators to do their numbers and understand we are part of their growth strategy, not the whole solution. In order to achieve a win-win situation, it must be recognised that one size doesn't fit all and operators shouldn't believe an intermediary that suggests otherwise.

The industry is experiencing a rapid period of growth and change, operators willing to take the time to understand how a variety of innovative partnerships could benefit their business will do well. Through informed decisions, with respect to their business situation, they can capitalise on the opportunity to grow and, ultimately, ensure more people in the UK become and remain active.

NEIL HARMSWORTH

Hussle: COO



The world is digital, so aggregation is here. Outside the budget gym sector, almost all the leading operators now use at least one of the main commercial aggregator services because there are huge advantages for collaborating with third parties that offer a proven route to customers.

At Hussle, we are experts at engaging with the Gen-Z and millennial 'pre-member' market and helping them to fit fitness into their lives on a basis that works for them. These are customers who are happy to pay a premium price through Hussle to access full-service clubs in a way that works for them, during a phase of their life that makes them unable to commit to a full membership.

Our main operator partners are full-service clubs whose primary revenue stream comes from contracted members, which makes our pre-member focus highly complementary to their business, as we provide them with incremental revenue and interaction with future members – a true win-win. Ultimately it will be the customers who determine what happens in the future. I always find it interesting to ask the operators I meet to look at their own behaviour. If you use aggregator services in other sectors, then you know how useful they can be.

I encourage all operators to simply have a conversation with companies like Hussle, Gympass or ClassPass to understand how each company can support your goals, and then meet with the operators who have fully embraced these services to learn from their experiences.





Heron says aggregators are a “necessary evil” in the boutique market



My advice is to tread very, very carefully. Read and understand the small print, reach out to other studio owners to get their experience. Be strong and tough in your dealings with them and don't let them push you around

► CHRIS HERON

The Engine Room: founder

My experience with aggregators is that they are experts at on-boarding you, but further down the line they threaten you to become exclusive to them in a very aggressive manner. I have had negative experiences with two large aggregators concerning exclusivity. They over-rode verbal agreements we had by pointing out the small print. I found their way of doing business very underhand. They only provide an app – they don't have any of the overheads – but they want to keep taking an increasing amount of the margin.

Unfortunately, in the London boutique market, aggregators are a necessary evil and, going forward, there is definitely a market for the high-end sites to create an industry-grown

aggregator. In the meantime, operators need to be careful about how they deal with aggregators and make sure they do not become dependent on them. My advice is to tread very, very carefully. Read and understand the small print, reach out to other studio owners to get their experience. Be strong and tough in your dealings with them and don't let them push you around.

On their part, aggregators need to provide greater transparency. They need to be more than just a platform, but work in partnership with operators to grow their business. This requires a human element, greater engagement and regular meetings. We're in this industry to get people fitter and healthier, so there should be an element of working together, not this feeling that they're working against you. Also we need less of the aggressive sales tactics – the hotel industry might be ready for it, but the health and fitness industry is not. ●

FACT CHECK

In collaboration with other industry players, PureGym sponsored a piece of independent, fact-based research into aggregators and what they mean for our industry. Completed by the international consulting firm OC&C, this has been widely shared with operators, industry associations and the aggregators themselves. Copies are available from: georgina.wilson@puregym.com

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The Wellness Company



An office space was transformed into a dedicated Skillbike studio

Inverclyde's winning studio

Skillbike studio becomes the most popular group fitness class at Waterfront Leisure Centre, with an occupancy level of 83 per cent



"The Skillbike studio has exceeded our expectations on multiple fronts: it has created a unique member experience and member demand that has resulted in programming more and more classes"

Kieron Vango, Inverclyde Leisure chief executive

Inverclyde Leisure launched its Skillbike studio in October 2018 to create a compelling class experience at Waterfront Leisure Centre.

The impact of the new studio has exceeded expectations and become the most popular group fitness class offered.

With six different clubs, the objective was to create an offering that differentiated the Premier Clubs (Inverclyde Leisure Fitness Plus) with something unique and different.

Providing a digital experience for members was another key objective.

An office space at Waterfront Leisure Centre was transformed into a dedicated Skillbike studio. Branding the space and creating an ideal training environment through sound, lighting and a large screen was integral to the overall project being able to deliver immersive member experiences.

LAUNCHING THE STUDIO

To successfully launch the Skillbike class, Inverclyde Leisure worked with Technogym to plan an effective launch event supported

by a Technogym Master Trainer. Several taster sessions were planned for the day, including a session for media. Ensuring the studio was launched professionally laid the foundation for future success.

ATTRACTION

Working with a partner agency, an integrated marketing campaign focused on the benefits of Skillbike to drive enquiries and prospects to the centre. Both digital and printed versions of the assets were used to appeal to three different persona groups: existing members that take part in cycle classes, millennials interested in a new boutique style offering, and outdoor cycling enthusiasts.

OCCUPANCY

Since the studio launched at the end of October, 640 classes have been held to date, with 8,000 participants equating to an occupancy level of 83 per cent. Outside the main classes, members that have taken part in a Skillbike class are then able to access the studio to use the bikes. ●

ACTIVE CAMPUS

Drew Manns checks out new and upcoming university building projects that are bringing a fresh focus to student wellbeing



The new Warwick Wellness Hub will be used by both students and the community

“The £49m Warwick Wellness Hub project, which ties in with Coventry’s tenure as the 2019 European City of Sport, is part of the university’s push to become the most physically active campus community in the UK by 2020” Lisa Dodd-Mayne

Location **University of Warwick**

Development **Warwick Wellness Hub**

Investment **£49m**

One of the largest wellness and fitness facilities in the UK, the 1,550 sq m Warwick Wellness Hub, which opened recently, features a 230-station gym from Technogym and a 12-court sports hall. The building also has pools, indoor climbing walls, studio spaces and outdoor sports pitches.

The £49m project, the launch of which ties in with Coventry’s tenure as the 2019 European City of Sport, is part of the university’s push to become the “most physically active campus community in the UK by 2020”, according to Lisa

Dodd-Mayne, director for sport and active community.

Nick Mennell from Willmott Dixon, which built the hub said: “Warwick’s gym is the biggest in the higher education sector. It enables people to be active in a way that works for them.

“Local communities can come together and share these spaces, getting active side-by-side and providing immense inspiration to one another,” he explained.

The sprawling facility opened on 15 April ahead of the Europe Corporate Games, which will take place in Coventry in August 2019. ▶



► Location **Solent University Southampton**

Development **Health and wellbeing gym**

Investment **£28m**

Work is nearly complete on Solent University Southampton's £28m (US\$37m, €32.6m) new sports complex.

Part of the school's ongoing £100m modernisation plan, the centre is situated on the northern end of the East Park Terrace (EPT) campus, and will feature a range of

recreation facilities, including three fitness studios, a health and wellbeing gym, two sports halls, a strength and conditioning gym and teaching facilities.

The centre is expected to be in full operation by this October to coincide with the start of the 2019/20 academic year.



**Southampton Solent's
health and wellbeing
facilities will come on
stream in Q3 2019**



Location **Portsmouth University**
 Development **Sport and wellbeing complex**
 Investment **£50m**

The new sport and wellbeing complex will have an urban orchard and green roof

Portsmouth University's new £50m (US\$ 66.2, €58.3) sports complex, which will be on-site this autumn, has been described as a new "benchmark" for the city.

The facility will feature a fitness centre with 175 exercise stations and multipurpose studios, as well as a 25m, eight-lane swimming pool and an eight-court sports hall.

The site will also boast a ski simulator and a climbing wall with bouldering.

The project is the first phase of the university's £400m estate masterplan, designed to reshape the campus and strengthen connections with the city.

The proposed plans will promote health and wellbeing through the provision of a wide range of

opportunities for activity and movement.

Additionally, the development will include the creation of an urban orchard and new pedestrian routes in the nearby Ravelin Park.

The building will feature photovoltaic panels and a green roof and is on target to be the first of its type in the UK to be rated outstanding by BREEAM.

"I'm excited to see this new first-class facility being open to the public, as I've no doubt it will help students and residents stay fit and healthy and enjoy all the wide-ranging benefits of an active lifestyle," said Portsmouth South MP Stephen Morgan.

The facility, designed by FaulknerBrowns, is scheduled to open in 2020. ►

Portsmouth University's proposed plans will promote health and wellbeing through the provision of a wide range of opportunities for activity and movement



Location **University of Stirling**

Development **University of Stirling Sports Centre**

Investment **£20m**



"This scheme will provide a new gateway building, which will open up the performance, wellbeing and social aspects to the wider student body and local community" Sherief El-Salamani, FaulknerBrowns

► **Construction on the** University of Stirling's £20m (US\$25.7m, €22.2m) sports facility is now underway.

"This is a significant moment for health, wellbeing and sport," explained University of Stirling director of sport Cathy Gallagher. "It signals the start of a

transformational chapter in our history."

Designed by architects FaulknerBrowns, the expansive complex, which is part of the school's £41m facelift, will feature an array of amenities, including a strength and conditioning area, a fitness suite, a three-court sports hall, an

indoor cycling studio and high-performance suite.

Sherief El-Salamani, the project lead for Sterling at FaulknerBrowns, said: "This scheme will enhance the student experience by providing new, more visually accessible sporting facilities, as well as a new gateway building, which will open up

the performance, wellbeing and social aspects of the centre to the wider student body and local community."

The building will integrate with the university's existing world-class facilities, which include national tennis and swimming academies. It is scheduled to open its doors in summer 2020.



Architects FaulknerBrowns are creating a gateway building for the University of Stirling



Dr Chris Gaffney, lecturer in sports science at Lancaster University conducts tests at the new facility

Location **Lancaster University**

Development **Strength and conditioning room**

Size **400sq m**

A wellbeing-focused Human Performance Lab and Strength and Conditioning Room has opened at Lancaster University after an eight-month refurbishment.

According to the university, the 400 sq m extension, which was first announced last year, will stimulate healthier living by encouraging members of the public and athletes to take a "positive mental attitude towards strength training".

The extension has created more space to meet the increasing demand for sports

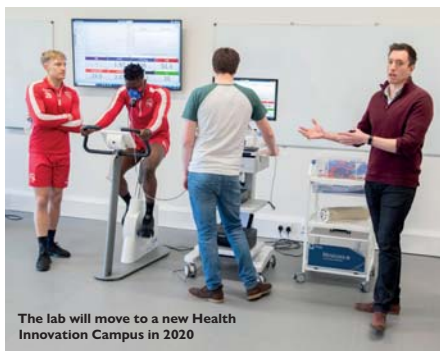
facilities on campus and will temporarily accommodate the Human Performance Lab to support research and learning around a newly-introduced Sports Sciences degree.

The Human Performance Lab will move to a new Health Innovation Campus when it opens in 2020.

The space features power racks and Olympic lifting platforms and cardio equipment including Wattbikes and kit from Technogym's Skill range, including Skill Bike, Skill Run, Skill Row and Skill Mill.

"This new facility will benefit our competitive athletes and teams, individuals and local/regional teams and organisations"

Kim Montgomery, Lancaster University



The lab will move to a new Health Innovation Campus in 2020

"We're so excited to be adding this great new facility to the Sport Lancaster portfolio," remarked Kim Montgomery, the school's head of sport.

She continued: "This will benefit our competitive athletes and teams and

individuals, as well as local and regional teams and organisations."

The space will also be used by staff and the people living in the wider community, promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging more people to get active. ●

INSPIRED HEALTH OUTCOMES

Lincs Inspire has worked with Legend Club Management Systems to deliver its Active Forever wellbeing programme to drive targeted health improvements for members. We look at how gathering data through Legend's Active Outcomes is paving the way for programme improvements as part of the wider health agenda

Lincs Inspire is a charitable trust serving the population of North East Lincolnshire and is focused on inspiring people to lead active, healthy, fulfilling lives through sporting, leisure and cultural activities and educational services.

A long-standing client of Legend Club Management Systems, in October 2018 the two organisations recognised a mutual opportunity to collaborate around a pilot scheme for Legend's newest software module, Active Outcomes.

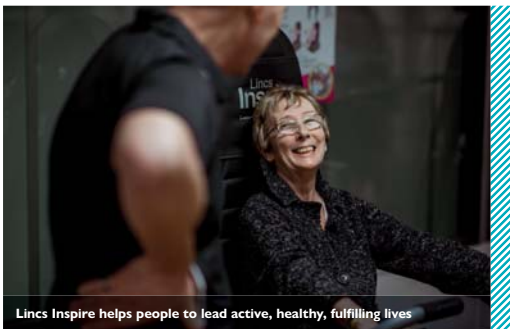
By replacing paper-based records and integrating with its Legend front-of-house and core member database, Active Outcomes enables Lincs Inspire to track patients referred by healthcare professionals into its Active Forever wellbeing programme and quantify the health benefits they're achieving.

David Watson, operations manager, Lincs Inspire, explains: "With the way the referral programme worked prior to partnering with Legend, we were struggling to get the evidence base we needed to provide detailed reports back to our healthcare partners. We recognised the opportunity to work with Legend to develop software that would provide us with insights on the success of our programmes, but also lay the foundation for further improvements."

COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Active Outcomes was designed with operator input throughout the process, and now enables real-time exercise tracking, evidence-based KPI reporting, appointment setting/management, scheme/individual targeting, configurable schemes and member conversion.

Between January and March 2019, Legend and Lincs Inspire worked collaboratively on a pilot based out of Lincs Inspire's Health and Wellbeing Centre in Grimsby. At the point of referral, patient/member information was input to Active Outcomes and activity and progress



Lincs Inspire helps people to lead active, healthy, fulfilling lives



We recognised the opportunity to work with Legend to develop software that would provide us with insights on the success of our programmes, but also lay the foundation for further improvements

**David Watson,
operations manager, Lincs Inspire**

tracked throughout the 12-week Active Forever wellness programme.

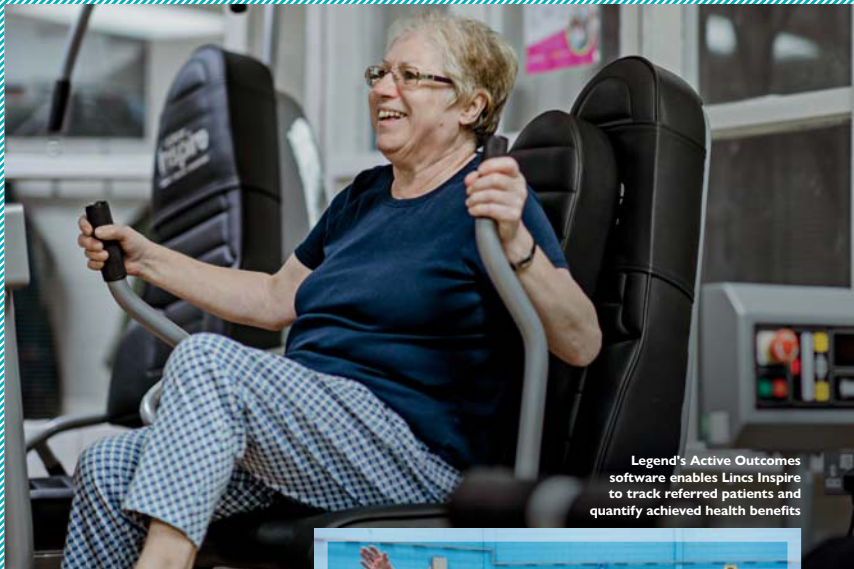
During this pilot period, regular weekly sessions between Legend and Lincs Inspire helped hone the functionality

within the software to meet both current and future needs, including automatic programme success reporting: real-time improvement measurement; optimisation for tablet and mobile; instant summary and trend display, as well as having deep links to the Legend core system through the 'join' and 'usage' functions.

From the initial induction provided by Lincs Inspire's specialist wellness instructors, individuals' data was recorded and managed through Active Outcomes – from the frequency of visits, to information on progress discussed during formal reviews at weeks 4, 8 and 12; as well as conversion to full membership at the end of the programme.

As David Watson says: "We wanted Active Outcomes to provide us both with the data we need to report back to our healthcare referral partners, but also to give us the insight to improve the programmes in line with the wider health & wellbeing agenda across the region."

"Applying for funding bids is one aspect of the investment, but actually it's about having a technology solution that's helping us to really put our



Legend's Active Outcomes software enables Lincs Inspire to track referred patients and quantify achieved health benefits



local population at the heart of the services we provide."

FUTURE OUTCOMES

Since April, Active Outcomes has been rolled out to three other Lincs Inspire sites: Cleethorpes Leisure Centre, Immingham Swimming Pool and King George V Stadium. The trust is already seeing improved feedback from members as they progress through the referral programme.

"It's early days still," says Ben Frary, senior sports and development officer, Lincs Inspire. "Many members are currently going through the first set of referrals using Active Outcomes. However, we're seeing positive feedback

during the review stages in terms of improved self-confidence and self-esteem.

"We now have a single, central and real-time view of how members going through the referral programme are progressing. It's starting to give us the insight we need to make sure that we're moving in the right direction; that we're using the data to evaluate our programmes."

Future developments lie in further opportunities around integration with other third party technology and applications. Lincs Inspire is currently trialling its first BodiTrax precision body composition and cellular monitoring machine. Integration with Active Outcomes, which is currently in progress, would allow for targeted health

improvements around weight reduction and muscle mass increase, for example.

"This initiative has been a really positive example of how Legend works with industry partners towards the wider goal of population health," concludes David Watson. "Our team has certainly been inspired to know that they have been a key part of developing a software tool that can make a big difference to the lives of people with long-term conditions both in our local area, and also nationally." ●



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Our industry in Asia is **growing at an exponential rate** but it's too fragmented to ensure sustainable growth. **Hundreds of exciting brands and businesses exist**, many with **great potential** but we **need to work together** to grow our marketplace, **engage new demographics** and **better serve communities and customers**

Ross Campbell, CEO and founder of Fit Summit

Crazy fit Asia

Over 300 fitness executives gathered in Singapore recently for the World Fit Summit.

HCM's **Steph Eaves** attended to chat with CEO and founder Ross Campbell

and find out more about the industry in Asia

How did you come to be based in Asia?

I studied sports science and neuroscience at university in Glasgow, having been a gym fanatic growing up. After university I fell into events and media and became the co-founder, CEO and then chair of an energy events company – Oil & Gas Council – that expanded to five offices globally.

I moved to Singapore from London to grow the business, and once we had successfully expanded into Asia, I sold my stake. After the sale I decided to start my own gym in Singapore – The Jungle.

What made you decide to launch Fit Summit?

When doing a business review of The Jungle, I realised there was no influential business network in Asia to help gym owners and fitness brands grow their business. This was the catalyst for creating FIT Summit.

Creating scalable and profitable fitness-related businesses in Asia is very tough – I've had first-hand experience of that. I wanted to ensure other business owners and investors had



Ross Campbell

access to the connectivity and business knowledge they needed to ensure the success of their business and the return of their investment.

What's your take on the fitness industry in Asia?

Excluding Japan, Asia has 35+ countries and a population of over 3 billion people, many of whom have had little exposure to fitness. We are far behind more mature markets in terms of market penetration for gym membership and investing in physical activities. Exercise is not part of the day-to-day lifestyle of most. This, however, is the opportunity many companies are now chasing.

Big boxes are finding increasing success across Asia. Yoga, pilates, HIIT and boxing have strong followings across many demographics and age ranges. However, we have a long way to go to successfully and sustainably grow our industry.

How do you see fitness in Asia evolving over the next few years?

Market penetration rates will increase and consumer price sensitivity will decrease, resulting in key evolutions across several fronts. Higher capitalised and better managed independents will take market share from the small, niche boutique market. There'll be an increase in the number of franchise brands in the region – especially HIIT and 24/7 gym concepts.

There will be unprecedented product choice for consumers as businesses innovate with everything from price point, membership structures, technology, design and experience. Big boxes will also be taking market share from the boutique market space with their innovative small box concepts and big investments in technology.



The fitness industry in Asia has seen significant growth in recent years, and experts say it's just the beginning

FIT FOR BUSINESS

Fit Summit speakers share their insights into Asia's fitness industry

RICH HUTSON

CEO, CHI Fitness, Malaysia

"Penetration rates are considerably higher in Europe and North America, and I don't ever see Asia coming close to those numbers until more affordable options are available"

It's a very exciting time to be in Asia as there's still considerable growth to come from within the fitness industry.

I think the boutique sector and big box budget clubs will see the biggest growth as they have the greatest opportunity. The budget clubs should make fitness more affordable to some of the lower income sectors and increase the penetration rates across Asia. Penetration rates are considerably higher in Australia, Europe and North America, and I don't ever see Asia coming close to those numbers until more affordable options are available for lower income sectors.



ANABEL CHEW

Co-founder, WeBarre, Singapore

"The entry of ClassPass into Asia has fuelled the growth, awareness and demand for fitness and wellness classes"

In some Asian cities like Singapore, Hong Kong and Bangkok, there is a significant fitness footprint and boutique fitness is thriving and growing immensely. The entry of ClassPass into Asia has also fuelled the growth, awareness and demand for fitness and wellness classes.

There is much more opportunity in other cities around Asia, as people become more aware of the importance to live an active lifestyle. I think the quality of classes in Asia are levelling up very quickly, and I wouldn't be surprised if the standards will match or even surpass fitness studios and gyms in the US, UK and Australia.





► SIMON FLINT

**CEO, Evolution Wellness,
Southeast Asia**



"Regional governments are becoming more aware of the importance of intervening in sedentary lifestyles, which has to be good for our industry"

While it's highly fragmented, the fitness industry in Asia is still attracting a number of new startups, hobbyists and franchisees, due to the relatively low barriers to entry for a small box outfit.

It's my personal view that there is sometimes an under-appreciation for the complexities around the health club industry and what it takes to be successful over the long term, and this can be evidenced in a number of outlet closures alongside an increasing number of openings.

On the positive side, there's an ever-increasing interest in the consumer mind around health and longevity. On top of that, regional governments are becoming more aware of the importance of intervening in sedentary lifestyles.

SHAN MS

Director, Cult.fit, India



"In India, it's about market creation – one needs to innovate heavily to reach the under-penetrated market"

Gym penetration in India is very low. The Indian fitness market is very small compared to other global markets but is growing very fast thanks to increased awareness, disposable incomes and better supply of gyms. Developing markets in Asia will behave similarly to what we are seeing in India, but markets like Singapore, Japan and Korea are different – they're at very advanced stages.

It's a very price-sensitive market and consumers are value-conscious. One needs to enhance the value and make it more compelling for the user. With a compelling product, the right business model and good marketing, the market can grow.

In India, it's about market creation – copying globally successful models won't work. One needs to innovate heavily to reach the under-penetrated market.

JACK THOMAS

**Founder, BASE & founder, Fitness
Business Asia podcast, Thailand**



"Concepts are coming to Asia quicker now than they used to – in just one or two years"

The fitness industry in Thailand is a few years behind cities like London and New York, of course. But concepts are coming here quicker now than they used to. Where something that's popular in America might have taken five or six years to hit Asia in the past, now it's more like one or two years.

We've definitely seen an explosion in boutiques in the last few years. But in Singapore and Thailand it feels like that's levelled out for now. I think some boutique operators are realising that it's not an easy path to riches. Even though health and fitness is booming, it doesn't mean you can just set up a business and it will automatically be successful.

I think we'll see some consolidation over the next few years. There'll be a few players that will join forces.

GITA SJAHRIR

Co-founder, Ride, Indonesia



"The big issue right now in Asia is that studios are so competitive with each other. And that's stupid"

The big issue right now in Asia is that studios are so competitive with each other. And that's stupid. If you're in the boutique fitness industry, you're attracting a certain demographic. So why are we competing with each other, trying to bite off little pieces of the same pie, when we can just work together to grow the pie? It's better to be part of an industry where there are lots of great players.



Fit Summit's six core goals:

- 1** To defragment the industry in Asia and be a catalyst for collaboration, knowledge sharing and growth.
- 2** To facilitate new investment into the Asia industry.
- 3** To help the industry optimally deliver innovative services, solutions and products into the marketplace.
- 4** To partner companies to ensure their employees are benefitting from new breakthroughs in health, fitness and wellness.
- 5** To assist government ministries and agencies to promote new health, fitness and wellness initiatives.
- 6** To promote Asia as a hub for health, fitness and wellness and a new global centre of excellence and innovation.

The event brought together industry professionals from across Asia





Delegates heard from some of the most inspiring players within the fitness industry in Asia

■ Upcoming event: Asia Fitness & Wellness Summit

This thought leadership and business development conference will take place on 25 September at the Mira Hotel, Hong Kong.

The event has been designed so owners, managers and investors in health, fitness and wellness brands can meet and do business.

On the agenda will be fitness, wellness and corporate wellness trends, investments, products, technology, market innovations, engagement strategies and partnerships.

www.thefitssummit.com/events/asia

■ About FIT Summit

FIT Summit is the thought leadership and networking platform for Asia-Pacific's health, fitness and wellness industry.

Its network includes multinational gyms, franchisees, boutiques and start-ups, apparel, equipment, nutrition and technology providers, sporting events, insurers, investment firms, consultancy groups, government bodies and corporate wellness.

www.thefitssummit.com

■ Upcoming event: The Bali Wellness Summit

This conference, which will be held at the Alila Seminyak on 28 November 2019, will focus on the business of wellness, looking at retreats, fitness, wellness and spa facilities, business trends, international investment, consumer demand, technology, wellness tourism, and market innovation.

The event will include keynote presentations, panel discussions, interactive Q&As, a sunset cocktail reception and a second day of optional wellness activities, such as yoga, meditation, mindfulness and fitness classes.

The event will welcome 225 executives, 100 companies and will feature 25 Speakers.

www.thefitssummit.com/events/bali



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TOTALFUSION

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LEON & MICHELLE McNIECE

Boutique fitness is hot, but what if members want more than just one discipline?

Leon and Michelle McNiece – founders of Goodlife, Australia's largest health club chain – have created a new boutique-style club that brings the most popular disciplines together under one roof. Steph Eaves visits to find out more



Michelle McNiece has long been a proponent of mind-body exercise

How did you get started in the industry?

M: I've always been into fitness and sport; I did gymnastics when I was younger and I coached while I was going through the sport, so it was a natural progression to coaching people in fitness. But I began by working in a gym in Melbourne, on reception.

L: And I bought the club where she used to work!

M: Leon was in hotels and hospitality and he had the business background. When I was working at my first fitness club and Leon was my boyfriend, he spent so much time there that one of the members asked, 'Is he one of the owners?'. Fast forward four years and he was the owner! For Leon, it was stepping into his passion.

So Leon, Michelle is the reason you discovered your passion for the industry?

L: Yes. I'd always been training in gyms and my business partner was already working at another health club. We had the opportunity to buy the club that Michelle had been working at, so we took it.

It was very run down – the previous owner had gone bankrupt, as people did in gyms back then. Everyone advised us not to do it and said we were crazy.

From that first club, you went on to build Goodlife Health Clubs, one of the biggest chains in Australia. How did that happen?

M: Leon's strategy was basically to go into a club and turn it into the kind of club that he would like to train in. That

"We bought gyms in Brisbane, Queensland, and we were one of the first clubs to put proper air conditioning in – that was the big thing that was needed at the time"

always meant updated equipment, whatever it was at the time, and of course, once we'd bought gyms in Brisbane, Queensland and moved up here, the big thing that was needed here was air conditioning.

L: We were one of the first clubs to put proper air conditioning in. A few clubs had evaporative cooling, but in the humid Queensland climate that doesn't work too well, and being from Melbourne, I think we were more used to a full AC experience.

We just believed in all the basics, which about twenty-odd years ago a lot of people weren't doing – for instance many facilities weren't very clean back then.

M: And we also put all our money back into the business. We were constantly making it better as new technology, new pieces of equipment and new ways of training came along. ►



Leon and Michelle say balance is key to health – they encourage members to mix yoga and pilates classes in with the more high intensity classes

► Were there any hiccups?

M: A deal with Healthland – a South African group – fell apart when they went broke, and we pulled out of the fitness industry for about eighteen months. We went back to hotels for a while. But Leon was like a caged lion.

L: Yeah, I missed the gyms a lot. So, we started back in the fitness industry in the early 2000s and that was the start of the Goodlife Health Club chain. We started by buying one club, and then a second and a third. They all had different names, and we realised we had to have a common name to join them all together and create a brand. And from there it just grew and grew. It's now the largest big box fitness club chain in Australia.

When did you sell it?

L: In 2006 we sold 53 per cent to private equity firm Colonial First State, and we thought we were going to have a fair run with those guys; we expanded quite rapidly over the course of the year. But then the bad news came that Colonial was closing its private equity division, and selling all assets.

So, through a little lack of experience we had sold just over the majority share at that point, so we got dragged along. We were forced to sell, and we sold to what is now Ardent Leisure, retaining a 5 per cent stake. We did quite well out of it.

I was the CEO, and I stayed on for another three years, but it's unlike me to work for somebody else, so it was a very tough three years. I still loved the brand but after three years we were itching to do something of our own.

That's when I left Goodlife and bought the rights for Snap Fitness in Australia and New Zealand and began developing that. By the time we sold Snap Fitness last year there were 250 clubs across Australia and New Zealand, and about a dozen nine-round boxing studios as well, and we sold them back to the US parent company.

When did the idea for Total Fusion start forming?

L: A few years ago, we knew we were probably looking to sell Snap and get back into our own brand. Through our own interest in training and our research from around the world, we realised that group fitness classes and functional training, movement and mindfulness was where we wanted to be – it's the way we love to train. And that was the conception of Total Fusion.

M: It's very much representative of how our training has evolved over the years, from back when it was just all high intensity, hard core – over-training essentially. Fitness has evolved so much over the last thirty years; people realised that we shouldn't really do resistance training every day, because our bodies need to recover. Mindfulness and mind-body exercise was becoming more prevalent, such as yoga and Pilates.

I'd been training like this for many years. Meanwhile, Leon's always been a very heavy lifter in the gym, and really lacked mobility and flexibility. Total Fusion really came to fruition when Leon finally started doing yoga and realised the differences that it made to his body. Yoga probably took his body to the best it had been in ten or twenty years.


Can you explain the concept of Total Fusion?

L: We could see the explosion of boutique fitness around the world, and saw that it becomes very expensive if you want to do different types – say if you want to do cycle, Pilates classes and yoga classes, and then you want a gym membership as well. Besides cost, it's the inconvenience of having to travel from site to site.


Also, we didn't particularly want to just do one modality ourselves, and we really felt that putting all those studios under one roof at an affordable price was where the market was going. We felt it was the best combination of

TOTALFUSION

YOGA • PILATES • MIXED FITNESS



Leon and Michelle say they've kitted out Total Fusion with the best equipment. Technogym treadmills and bikes can be found in the Fusion room (above) and Cycle studio (below)



Hyperthermic training is used to reduce anxiety and depression

membership facilities that you can provide for people, and for us to train in ourselves.

M: If you train in all the different rooms, every room supports the next. So, the kind of work that you're doing in Pilates is helping you in the functional room and the fusion room, and also helping your yoga. They're all very complementary to each other.

So members are encouraged to do all the classes?


L: Absolutely. We want people to know that doing high intensity classes every day is not optimal, so we definitely want them to break it up and do a yoga class, then another day do a Pilates class or a Barefoot Bootcamp.

M: You see, we have the wisdom of age! We've done what you shouldn't do and we're very passionate about longevity now and keeping your health and wellness for as long as you possibly can. And to do that, you can't afford to be injuring yourself, which comes from over-training. No matter how resilient you think you are, it's best for your body to mix it up.

Not only is your fitness going to improve more but you're going to maintain that fitness for many more years. You're going to enjoy what you're doing, and you're not going to burn out mentally or physically.

Tell me about your Fusion classes?

M: We came across Fusion classes in the US, and we fell in love with them. We thought the only way we can have these classes back home is if we create them ourselves. These classes use the science of hyperthermic (heated) conditioning, which



in the last few years has been the focus of a lot of research. This heated conditioning is used for reducing anxiety and depression, as well as a host of other physiological benefits. It's incredible how great it makes you feel, and how quickly your fitness improves. Hyperthermic training has even been touted as more effective than altitude training.

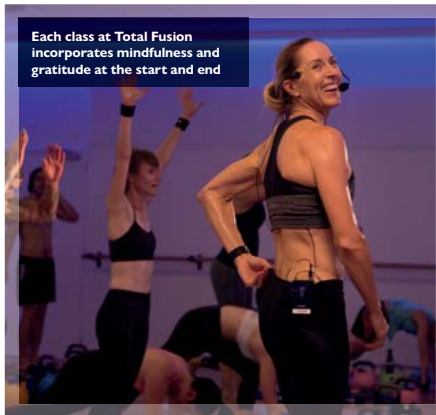
Our fusion classes are a combination of yoga, Pilates, functional fitness and high intensity interval training (HIIT). You address all of your fitness needs in the one class – strength, mobility, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness.

You also offer barefoot training classes. Why is this important?

M: Wearing shoes acts like a crutch, leading to foot and ankle dysfunction. This leads to dysfunctional movement patterns throughout the whole body. For most movement, neural



Each class at Total Fusion incorporates mindfulness and gratitude at the start and end



- signaling begins at the feet, so it makes sense to allow our feet access to the earth and give them freedom of movement. Training barefoot improves strength, flexibility, mobility, balance, proprioception and overall movement mechanics.

At Total Fusion you incorporate mindfulness at the start and end of every class. Why?

M: That's very important. In this day and age anxiety and depression are incredibly prevalent. Most people rush through their days with so much to do, so taking the time to stop and reflect is a real luxury.

Acknowledging your intention and feeling gratitude are important aspects of our classes. We aspire to help our members to release stress, anxiety and tension, and we know that exercise, mindfulness, meditation and community are all important tools to achieve this.

Do you put a big emphasis on community?

L: If you go to a normal gym now, very rarely do you see people without headphones on. Even the gym environment has become a real social disconnect. So, here you don't have the opportunity to wear headphones, you come in and the atmosphere is so unlike any other gym or training environment that we've ever created before.

It's probably the thing that we enjoy the most about coming into Total Fusion. It's those relationships and the way people connect with each other and communicate. It's just a really nice environment to come into, very non-threatening.

M: Community is a very big part of it. We encourage the instructors to welcome any new people to the class and get everyone to introduce themselves to each other at the start of the class. A big part of the appeal of classes is the impact that group energy has on the way you feel. Yes, you're

exercising, but you're actually connecting, and disconnect is a big part of why people are so anxious, stressed and lonely.

Did you design the in-club cafe with this in mind?

L: Yes, it's a real meeting place; people will sit down, have a drink, have one of our healthy takeaway meals.

I think it's common to have the healthy smoothies, etc. But I think we go a little bit further with our tonics.

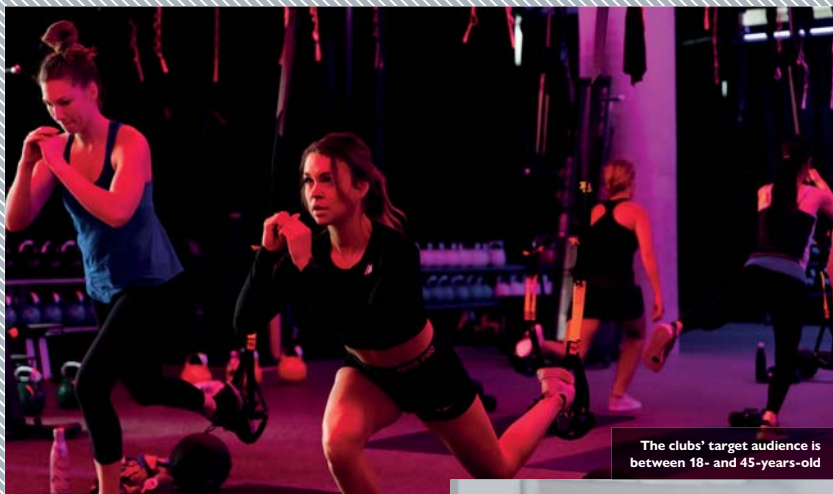
M: We use tonic herbs and some medicinal mushrooms. For example, we have one that's called a Reishi Cappuccino. There's no coffee in it but it will do far more for you than coffee.

We also use Gynostemma tea, which I've never found anywhere else in Australia. It's an adaptogenic herb that has a long list of benefits. Adaptogenic herbs adapt to what your body needs, so if you're a bit flat, it's going to lift your energy up, or if you're a bit hyper it's going to calm you down.

On all levels, adaptogenic herbs really help you to find that balance, and that's pretty much what we're trying to find – a balance in our lifestyle, a balance in the exercise and the movement that we do, a balance in how busy we are and how restful we are at other times.

Do you have a special interest in nutrition and where did that come from?

M: Yes, I'm super passionate about all things wellness. And nutrition is probably the aspect of lifestyle that has the strongest impact on your health.



The clubs' target audience is between 18- and 45-years-old

Sleep is a close second, and exercise. So, as much as we're incredibly passionate about exercise, we realise it's not the be all and end all. Exercise is important to heart health, brain health, improved sleep, stress, our physical fitness – essentially it aids most bodily functions. But what you put in your body creates who you are. Every cell in your body is made up of what you ingest.

How many Total Fusion clubs do you have?

L: We have three clubs, each with completely different demographics, and all running very well. Two are in Westfield shopping centres. We had a fair bit of success in shopping centres when we had Goodlife – a lot of their best performing clubs are located in Westfield, so it was natural for us to do the same with Total Fusion, especially because we're not a direct competitor to Goodlife. We're a completely different concept and a different model, so Westfield didn't have any issues putting us in the same centres as Goodlife.

What kind of demographics do you appeal to?

L: It's probably a long way outside your typical gym user – our biggest portion is the 18-45-year-old age group, but we also have a lot of mothers and daughters who come in together, and there are also a couples that train together.



M: When we first opened, we weren't expecting to get so many people who previously didn't like group exercise, who had no desire to go to a gym, had no desire to go and do group fitness classes. But not only were they coming along, they quickly became obsessed.

What attracted these gym newbies?

M: I think the overall feel. People come in and it looks beautiful and incredibly clean, our staff are welcoming and genuinely friendly, and it's very affordable.

L: Yes, I think initially it's our affordability – many people are wanting to try all those different modalities, however, the cost of paying for memberships to several studios is unachievable. Once they come and experience our myriad of classes, the quality and volume, and classes they are unable to find anywhere else, they are blown away by the value, and also how much fun fitness and movement can be.

*"Acknowledging your intention
and feeling gratitude are
important aspects of our classes.
We aspire to help our members
release stress, anxiety and tension"*



The clubs are designed to foster community and social connection among all members

▶ What are the rates like now?

L: Our rates are incredibly affordable. We work on a large scale model to try to keep the prices down, in order to make this concept, and movement in general, available to as many people as possible. Our classes have more energy and vibe the more people are in them!

Our prices start at AU\$20 up to AU\$55 (£29.50) a week for full Platinum membership. Our Platinum Club is incredibly high-end, with magnificent marble bathrooms, Aesop soap, cold scented towels and a truly beautiful fit-out.

What's your take on the fitness industry in Australia? How does it compare to the rest of the world?

L: We think Australia is super competitive. In terms of clubs per head of population, I think we're as competitive as anywhere in the world, and our facilities are pretty good as well.

We certainly don't feel like we're a long way behind in any sort of fitness trend. Globalisation has really bridged a gap – when we first started there was definitely a bit of a lag here in Australia, but I just don't think there really is any more.

We're probably a little bit behind in the boutique fitness space, even though F45 and some other ones have done a great job. But big boutiques from the US, UK and Europe, where people need to be willing to pay \$35 for one class, there hasn't been a big influx of those clubs opening up here. It probably will happen, maybe it's a cultural thing, but Australians just haven't quite adopted that mentality yet.

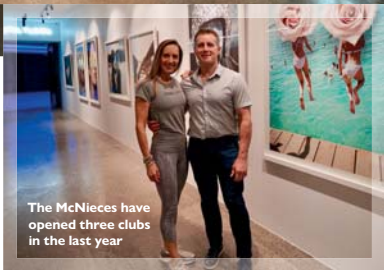
Are you planning to open more clubs?

L: We're opening one in Morningside, Brisbane next year, and we've also been looking at Sydney – we have a partner there who's interested in a joint venture with us. We've looked at a couple of sites in Melbourne, but we haven't found the right one yet.

There are definitely plans, but we're concentrating on making sure we get the model right, that we roll it out successfully and have all our systems and procedures in place.

We're not in a rush, we've had good growth so far, we've got three facilities up and running in just over twelve months and we're now taking a bit of a breath.

We have resource for growth, but we want to make sure we do it in a nice controlled manner. Because it is such a



The McNieces have opened three clubs in the last year

people-driven business, it's not just like opening a little Snap 24/7 where it's really low service and quite a simple model to run. This is a complex model to run, there is a lot of up-training involved, so we need to make sure we've got things right, make sure we've got the right partners to do it. We just want the best for the business in the long-term. ●

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POSTURE AND BALANCE

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RAISE THE BAR



Weight bearing activity is vital for bone health

BONE loading

You may be able to help your members and customers avoid or reverse osteoporosis by encouraging weight bearing activities, as **Liz Terry** reports

Having strong bones is essential to good health, especially as we get older, enabling us to remain active and with good vitality and quality of life.

Osteoporosis – brittle bones – is a highly debilitating disorder, which can lead to fractures and falls and it's estimated that one in three women and one in five men will suffer from it in their lifetime and this number is growing as the population ages and people become more sedentary.

However, the good news is that the fitness industry has a big part to play in helping people who are susceptible to

this disease to avoid it or lessen its impact.

How does it work?

Doing weight bearing activity is vital in achieving good bone health. The stress that is placed on the bones by exercises such as weight lifting, plyometrics and running stimulates the body to build and maintain strong bones.


It does this because the impact that is generated by exercise compresses the bone matrix, triggering the bone to take in calcium and other minerals and thereby increasing bone density which results in stronger bones.

What load is needed?

The amount of weight bearing that is needed to trigger this response is called osteogenic loading because it takes a certain 'load' to stimulate the bone building cells.

This 'bone loading' is essential if people are to maintain a healthy skeletal system, and we expect more fitness businesses to add bone loading to their workout options, as the demand for wellness services increases and people are more aware of the need to work hard to ensure a healthy older age.

When it comes to the impact of exercise on bone health, scientists



The impact of weight loading triggers the bone to take in calcium and other minerals

measure activities according to how many multiples of body weight they load onto the skeleton.

A study by Kevin Deere, et al. at the University of Bristol in the UK looked at the bone loading which was needed to stimulate bone mineralisation in teenagers and found the amount of loading required was 4.2 times their body weight*.

This means if you weigh 130 pounds, you need to load your bones with 546 pounds to trigger bone building.

How to load up?

At rest, gravity applies a load to our bones which equals that of our body weight. Activities such as walking, jogging or running add more load, but much higher impact is needed to achieve a load of four times your bodyweight, with weight training, plyometrics or jumping being options.

Although the researchers cautioned the extrapolation of these results into other population groups, the results nevertheless highlight that light exercise is unlikely to be as effective as heavier lifting.

Adding bone loading to your repertoire as an operator or personal trainer will enable you to better serve members and customers, as well as enabling them to take steps to improve their long-term

health, longevity and quality of life.

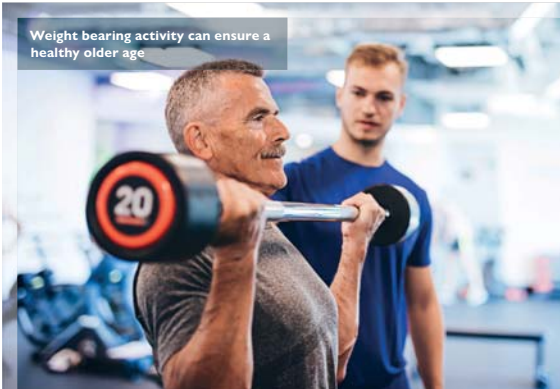
Researchers point out that while exercise such as cycling and swimming have excellent health benefits in areas such as flexibility, strength and cardiovascular capacity, they effectively 'unload' the bones, so any gym members who focus exclusively on these types of exercise and are without bone loading in their exercise regime as a result, may be susceptible to osteoporosis and would be advised to add more weight bearing activity to their workout programme.

Another area for consideration is the

advice that people get to enable them to make the right exercise choices, as it's important they avoid overloading and creating other musculoskeletal issues.

It's advised that anyone with low bone density or osteoporosis works with a fitness professional to ensure that bone loading is done progressively and without causing harm. ●

* Deere, et al., Habitual levels of high, but not moderate or low, impact activity are positively related to hip BMD and geometry: results from a population-based study of adolescents, JBMIR, Vol. 27, No. 9, September 2012, pp 1887-1895
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22492557>



Weight bearing activity can ensure a healthy older age



CRYING OUT

For every new parent who loves hunkering down at coffee mornings, there is one who's itching to get back to exercise. **Kath Hudson** reports on some sanity saving post-natal exercise concepts...

Like Christmas, having a new baby is hailed as an idyllic time. Some people are lucky and sail through conception, pregnancy and childbirth and end up with a well behaved baby who sleeps through the night straight away (oh, and don't they let you know it).

For others, it's a time of massive adjustment and isolation: learning a new skillset; away from the validation of work and the company of colleagues; sleep deprived; with limited personal time; probably dealing with some physical pain or birth injuries; possibly dealing with trauma, mental health, financial, or relationship issues. It can be tough. (Although relatively short-lived, thankfully!)

What all new parents – especially mums – could benefit from, is hanging out regularly with a group of like-minded people and exercising in a way that includes their baby, so they don't have to find childcare, or deal with the guilt of leaving them.

Not only can exercise help women shift any baby weight they're carrying – which often gets worse with all the cake that post-baby hangouts tend to include – but it would be hugely beneficial for the mental health and bonding with babies for all parents. I'm convinced that if Buggyfit, Sweaty Mamas or Busy

Lizzy had existed in Cornwall 13 years ago, I could have avoided post-natal depression.

As well as helping thousands of people physically and mentally, reaching out to this cohort would benefit health clubs. The ideal time to run a parent and baby class is at 10am, when clubs are quiet. Also you'd be introducing your club to future potential members and setting up the habit of getting parents to exercise with their children, which could be instrumental in preventing childhood obesity.

One way of welcoming this demographic is to simply offer sessions where babies and toddlers are allowed to come and run riot, but a better option is to create classes in which the little ones are part of the action. Xtend Barre has a class that is a fusion of ballet and pilates, where babies are strapped to their parents for barre work and distracted with toys for core work on the floor. Triyoga invites parents to bring babies from 40 days old to a restorative session, which promotes balance and strength and, for women, works on healing the core and pelvic floor.

Another option is to outsource to an expert by collaborating with existing businesses who've dealt with teething issues and offer programmes either for license or franchise. Let's take a look at some of the options...



Busylizzy offers specially curated classes, run by qualified instructors



JULIE CLABBY

Busylizzy: founder

“The idea for Busylizzy occurred to me when I was on maternity leave in 2011, with two children under two.

I'd moved to Surrey from London and suddenly felt very isolated. Coming from a background of being a fitness manager, I wanted to go to the gym and get back in shape, but it required a military operation to get myself booked in to a class, as well as my children into the crèche, which was costly and meant leaving them with strangers.

On top of this, I was also taking the children to their own classes, like baby massage, and I kept thinking there must be a way of bringing these together. Unable to find it, I decided to set it up myself.

Busylizzy offers a selection of specially curated classes run by qualified instructors, including post-natal bootcamp, buggy fitness, pilates, yoga



During the fitness classes, the babies play on top of a central nest of duvets, with the mums around them, and it creates a lovely vibe in the room

and aerobics, as well as a separate range for pregnant women. The children are catered for with baby and toddler classes based around movement, music and art. During the fitness classes, the babies play on top of a central nest of duvets, with the mums around them, and it creates a lovely vibe in the room. The majority of the class is focused on fitness, but there is some baby-orientated activity at the beginning and end, such as baby massage.

Membership costs £45 a month for any four classes a month, or £108 for unlimited access. Depending on location, there are between nine and 25 classes on offer each week and booking for all the classes is done via an app.

In response to demand, the franchise business was launched in 2014. It costs £18,500 to buy a territory and 9.5 per cent of the turnover on an ongoing basis. For this, franchisees get a website and booking app, the training and operations manual, marketing and social media assets, access to the 25 bespoke classes, the uniform and equipment.

It's designed to be a lifestyle business, which can be completed in 20 to 25 hours a week, and many of our franchisees are members who decide not to go back to their former careers.

I would love to speak with more health and fitness operators about how we could collaborate to grow the market. ▶



Hannah and Dan McVerry
have sold 119 franchises in
Sweaty Mama since 2014



► DAN McVERRY

Sweaty Mamas: co-founder

After having our second child in 2014, my wife, Hannah, was spending a lot of time in the gym and realised there was little provision for pre- and post-natal women, so she trained as a PT specialising in this area.

However, it was a narrow market, as there were two big barriers: sorting out childcare and not being able to afford PT on maternity pay. Wanting to continue working with pre- and post-natal women, Hannah came up with the idea of a group exercise concept where the babies become part of the class.

We choreographed the Sweaty Mama programme, which has nine tracks, with moves designed around the baby. There are three sections to the classes: the baby on the floor next to mum, then carrying them (which is optional) and finally, using the baby as a counter weight.

Added to this there's a mums/girls bootcamp, which is game orientated, with concepts based around a number of games, including Wheel of Fortune, Monopoly and Hungry Hippos. It's like a girls night out without the alcohol. The classes are offered as a six or eight week course, and range from £35 to £45, depending on the location.

A few months after launching we opened our first franchise and we then

sold a further seven in the next three months. In 2.5 years, we've sold 119 franchises, mostly to clients who are looking for a life change.

It costs up to £3,000 to buy a five-year licence. This includes a 12-week training course which is being accredited by Active IQ, which qualifies them to Level 2 Exercise to Music and Level 3 Pre and Post Natal Exercise. Franchisees also get access to a live training portal, business support, the branded equipment and marketing material. We usually get them to source their locations when they're part way through the training, so they're all ready to hit the ground running once they qualify.



There are three sections to the classes: the baby on the floor next to mum, carrying them (which is optional) and using the baby as a counter weight



Buggyfit workouts tend to attract women – the company has also just launched a home workout option



The classes are a mix of cardiovascular and strength training: a full body workout made up of squats, lunges, press ups, toning work with resistance bands, and mat work if the weather is right

EMMA REDDING

Buggyfit: founder

“Like many women, I was at my fittest and slimmest when I had my first baby, yet despite staying active through my pregnancy, I still managed to gain five stone in total by the end.

I went back to my gym eight weeks after having my son and found that I couldn't do post-natally what I had been able to do at 38 weeks pregnant. This was a real shock to me. With no screening, or knowledge of pelvic floor rehab, I went back into doing jumping jacks, when I shouldn't have done.

I couldn't find what I needed, so I decided to create it myself. I left the coffee and cake mornings to go for walks, and then my friends joined me. When my

son was 10 months old, and I had enough breathing space, I retrained as a PT, specialising in pre- and post-natal exercise, and created Buggyfit.

Although walking is involved, our tag line is that we're 'not just a walk in the park'. The classes are a mix of cardiovascular and strength training: a full body workout made up of squats, lunges, press ups, toning work with resistance bands, and mat work if the weather is right. We go out in all weather and adjust accordingly – I've led classes in everything from minus 8 to 36 degrees.

The sessions are also very social, which is important – having a baby can be a trying and isolating time, but through Buggyfit women meet likeminded people who we've seen become friends for life.

Now, sixteen years after I launched it, there are 94 trainers across the country

and 260 classes a week. We've expanded by selling a licensing agreement. Trainers need to be Level 2 qualified and attend our one-day training course. They then run their own business and pay an annual fee of £595 to use the branding, and receive access to our private platform and central marketing.

The price of classes varies across the country from £5 to £9, as we allow our instructors to price according to their location and local spending habits.

Licencees keep all their earnings and can also earn a 20 per cent affiliate payment for promoting our new online offer, 'Buggyfit at Home'. This costs £149 for a 14-week session and allows mums to get results quicker, by supplementing their classes with home training. It also allows new parents to access workouts in areas that do not yet have trainers. ▶

[THIS MUM MOVES]

A new project aims to provide information that supports new mums to get active

Ukactive has kicked-off a project called This Mum Moves, aimed at supporting women to be active during and after pregnancy.

The project has been designed to provide midwives, health visitors and other healthcare professionals with better information, in order for them to be confident in recommending physical activity.

As part of the launch, ukactive's project team undertook a baseline survey of healthcare professionals' knowledge and confidence in providing advice.

Conducted in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) and the Institute of Health Visiting (iHV), the project ran focus groups with midwives, health visitors, and pregnant and postpartum women.

Using a Patient and Public Involvement approach (PPI), seven focus groups were organised in the pilot areas of Sheffield and Bexley, with support from local councils.

More than a quarter (27 per cent) of the

healthcare professionals responding to the survey indicated that they did not know whether pregnant women should continue to engage in 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week, as recommended by the Chief Medical Officer in 2017.

Meanwhile, the pregnant women and new mothers in the groups called for greater consistency in the information provided, as well as specific, early advice from healthcare professionals, and links to local services.

The findings were consistent with existing literature in this area, which shows there is a lack of knowledge and confidence in providing physical activity advice and guidance during pregnancy and the postnatal period.

Insights will be used to develop a toolkit for healthcare professionals and a wider campaign aimed at supporting pregnant women and new mothers in maintaining regular activity during pregnancy and beyond.

Insights from the pilots and focus groups

will be used by the project team to develop the resources and campaign for launch this autumn in Sheffield and Bexley, with plans for a national rollout in the future.

The project is funded by the National Lottery and Sport England in collaboration with ukactive, CCCU, iHV, the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, Best Beginnings, Pelvic Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy, Aston University, the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine, and the Centre for Sport, Physical Education and Activity Research (SPEAR).

"Remaining active after having a baby, or starting new activities, can be a daunting prospect," said Sport England's Phil Smith.

"Our insight tells us that despite time pressures and conflicting priorities, new and expectant mums want to be more active.

"We hope this funding equips healthcare professionals with tools to help them feel confident guiding women to activities." ●



Our insight tells us that despite their time pressures and conflicting priorities, new and expectant mums want to be more active

Phil Smith, director of sport, Sport England

Research conducted reveals that pregnant women and new mothers want greater consistency in the information provided to them about physical activity



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ACTIVELAB 2019

MEET THE FIT-TECH STARTUPS

Following the ActiveLab Live! finale at the recent Active Uprising conference, we take a look at startups that are using technology to help people become healthier and more active

BLAZEPOD www.blazepod.com

ESTABLISHED January 2017 FOUNDER Yaniv Shneiderman

BlazePod's uniquely designed lighting Pods create visual cues and prompts to enhance workouts, challenge speed, agility, reaction times and other fitness elements. The BlazePod app is the heart that makes the Pods beat. The app links mobile devices to the Pods via Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE), controlling the way the Pods work for each specific drill, and receiving data back as each Pod's light is tapped out.

KEY INFORMATION

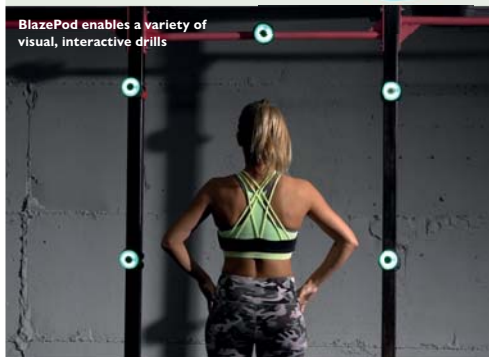
- (at time of application)
- 2,500+ users
 - Developing a B2B product



Yaniv Shneiderman



BlazePod enables a variety of visual, interactive drills



HEALTHPOD www.yourhealthpod.com

ESTABLISHED January 2018
FOUNDER Tom Sheppey, CEO

HealthPOD connects consumers with personal trainers and nutritionists for a one-to-one consultancy video-call. It's an online, live, on-demand consultancy service focusing on health and physical activity in the first instance.

KEY INFORMATION

- (at time of application)
- £30k total raised
 - Website has hosted over 150 trials and driven over 2,000 web visits



Tom Sheppey



Yuval Odem

PLAYERMAKER www.playmaker.co.uk

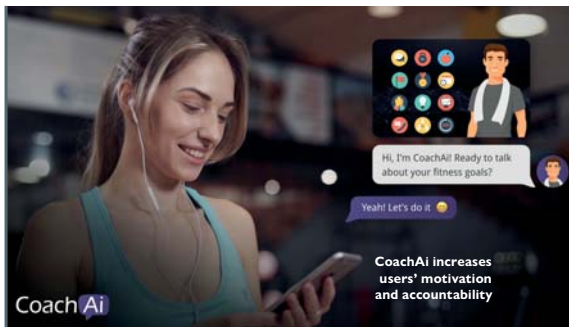
ESTABLISHED April 2014
FOUNDER(S) Guy Aharon, CEO
Yuval Odem, COO

PlayerMaker is a next-generation player development solution that focuses on better youth player development and youth coaching enhancement. Trusted by top UK Premier League and Championship academies, PlayerMaker uniquely provides technical, tactical and physical performance insights. Motion sensors and advanced machine learning algorithms track all movement and ball touches to deliver a competitive advantage.

KEY INFORMATION

(at time of application)

- £9m total raised
- Looking to develop and release a consumer facing product



COACHAI www.coachai.com

ESTABLISHED December 2016
FOUNDER(S) Daniel Cohen, COO Nadav Sala Shai Neiger, CTO

CoachAi is a virtual coach that acts as a personal companion to each and every user via their smartphone, increasing motivation and accountability while reducing friction. By intervening at just the right points along a person's journey, CoachAi helps them reach the tipping point – the point at which exercise becomes a regular part of their life.



Daniel Cohen

KEY INFORMATION

(at time of application)

- US\$345,000 total raised

IMMERSIVE REHAB www.immersiverehab.com

ESTABLISHED August 2016 FOUNDER Isabel Van De Keere

Immersive Rehab creates interactive and engaging physical and neuro-rehabilitation and mobility programmes in virtual reality that improve patient mobility and recovery. The goal is to increase the effectiveness of physical and neuro-rehabilitation, reduce referral times into physical therapy and improve patient outcomes.

KEY INFORMATION (at time of application)

- Next generation technology tested with 30+ individuals



Isabel Van De Keere



Stephanie Newport-Booth

GOSWEAT www.gosweat.com

GoSweat is a curated database that enables people to book 2,000 activities across 1,000 venues, all without needing a membership. GoSweat has the potential to become the new face of employee wellbeing, by replacing traditional gym memberships. Companies pay a monthly fee, which is then converted into GoSweat credit to be redeemed against any booking on-site.

FOUNDED September 2016 FOUNDERS Alex Hind, Stephanie Newport-Booth

KEY INFORMATION (at time of application)

- Raised £300k investment 1,000+ B2C users
- Participants of the OpenActive Accelerator and the Mayor of London's Programme



Shapewatch lets users see how their body is changing, with 3D animated visualisation

SHAPEWATCH www.shapewatch.com

ESTABLISHED January 2017 SALES DIRECTOR Alan Loudon

Shapewatch is an automated self-serve solution that provides a discreet, non-invasive body scanning experience with consistent, accurate results in a matter of seconds. Promoting long-term behavior change through ongoing comparisons using 3D visualisation, the Shapewatch solution enables health clubs to offer members a detailed and highly visual account of their key biometrics. It's like the ultimate animated selfie in 3D.

KEY INFORMATION (at time of application)

- Flexible design architecture enables clubs to integrate Shapewatch into their branded apps



Alan Loudon

FITTRACK www.fittrack.io

ESTABLISHED May 2015 FOUNDERS Maximilian Maurer, COO Bernhard Hackl, CTO Nico Festl, CEO

Fittrack is a retrofit sensor solution that can be attached to existing fitness equipment, enabling all relevant workout data to be sent in real-time to the user's app. The service enables athletes to document their fitness workouts completely automatically and helps to motivate them with detailed progress reports, challenges and individualised workout routines. By utilising the training data of their members, gym operators are finally able to adapt their offerings to how their members actually work out in their gyms.

KEY INFORMATION

(at time of application)

- €1.3m raised total, installed in eight gyms in Germany, Austria and Spain
- Looking to break into the UK market



Nico Festl



Phil Tsang

ROCKET IMPACT

www.rocketimpact.com

ESTABLISHED May 2016
FOUNDERS Phil Tsang, Deepak Vohra

Rocket Impact is a tech start-up company, which specialises in creating mobile games for the health and fitness industry. Rocket Impact's product is called Afitar® – a pioneering mobile fitness game, designed to encourage the young generation to exercise collectively whilst having fun with an action puzzle game at the same time.

KEY INFORMATION

(at time of application)

- 300 users with no marketing to date
- Product coming to market



Afitar is designed to encourage young people to get active in a fun way

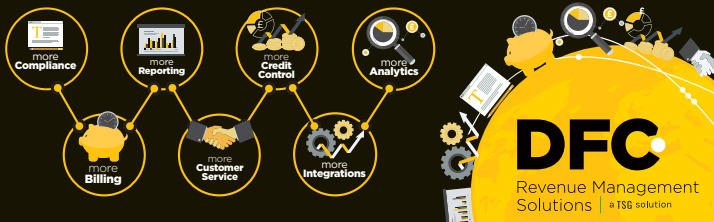
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Maximising REVENUE

It's essential for clubs that the payment process is as easy to use as possible. HCM caught up with some of the leading member payment services to find out how they're helping clubs

ASHBOURNE MEMBERSHIP MANAGEMENT

What's new?

A big advantage of being a centralised provider of payment collections, club software and access control, is that we're able to call on information from every corner of the industry.

For example, our new Business Intelligence Dashboard gives operators an at-a-glance view of a range of data insights, as well as various reports and invoices. Management then acts on these insights by reaching out to members with emails, texts and app push notification campaigns. All this through an online portal which can be accessed anywhere.

How does your pricing work?

For a small fee per direct debit or card transaction, Ashbourne effectively acts as the 'back office' of the gyms and

clubs we work with. Our in-house support team handles member queries while chasing any late payers or defaulting members. This allows our partners to focus on running their clubs and creating value for members.

Alongside our payment collection services, all Ashbourne packages include our fully integrated suite of club software, including things like class booking technology and a prospect management system which can enable staff to managing the membership sales pipeline during the sales and induction process.

What else can you tell us?

We're constantly working with our partner clubs to fine-tune the services we provide and develop new software features. In a market that is constantly evolving at speed, we have no intention of standing still!



Services that reduce admin and make cash collection easier can boost a club's profits

HARLANDS GROUP

What's new?

The service provided by Harlands Group continues to go from strength to strength and we now manage the payments for around 30 per cent of the membership payments in the UK health and fitness industry.

Our service uses technology to drastically reduce membership administration, allowing clients to focus on service delivery and sales, while at the same time reducing defaulters and increasing income. Seen as a 'no-brainer' in the low-cost industry for some time, our new clients include the likes of Marriott Hotels, Places for People, Active Nation, Freedom Leisure, Total Swimming and Beth Tweddle Gymnastics.

How does pricing work?

Our pricing model allows leisure operators large and small to benefit from our service as we charge per successful membership transaction. Larger clients benefit from a bespoke service where we can brand the service to their requirements. Smaller clients such as single sites and boutique studio operators get all the same technology but branded by Harlands.

Costs are nearly always significantly outweighed by the extra income we generate for clients as we change the behavior of defaulters and make it easier for members to pay – we call this 'The Harlands Effect'.

What else can you tell us?

Harlands Group is now branching out into Euro-zone countries. This year we started to deliver our full service with local language capability in Spain and the Netherlands, and this will shortly be followed by Italy and Germany.

LEGEND CLUB MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

What's new?

We offer a unique proposition for customers by using a single database solution to provide our payment services. This is a key factor in boosting performance in cash collection, customer service scores, increased member acquisition and retention. Clients love their financial performance metrics and interactive dashboards too – which sweep in attendance, bookings, secondary spend and longevity for unparalleled business insights.

A new feature is our in-built algorithms to measure risk of default, which triggers a preemptive communication to improve collection rates.

How does pricing work?

We charge a low rate per direct debit. We avoid charging default fees to members unless clients insist, in which case this is a client revenue line. Default fees are a concern as evidence shows this damages overall member satisfaction and hurts long term.

For clients switching payment provider, we de-risk the process by providing guarantees and managing the transition. We delay service charging until we have demonstrated improved collection rates. We offer a very flexible service, so managing a transition, extracting records from planned collections, altering membership packages or record removal from credit control are all complementary services.

What else can you tell us?

Operators are well aware that getting the direct debit function right in-house is difficult. Yet it is such a key deliverable that affects customer service so acutely and has a big impact on cash flows and revenues. Speak to a specialist provider today to see how they can help. ▶



Making the customer journey effortless and intuitive results in more reliable payments

► DFC

What's new?

We are continuously working to enhance the customer journey at the front end and drive innovation of omni-channel payment capabilities. Our joining process takes as little as three minutes end-to-end and we recently managed to cut-down the sign-up process time by almost 75 per cent for one client.

We also provide a stable customer service solution both to clients and members. Our customer service team takes thousands of calls a day, ensuring answer rates and grade of service levels are consistently high.

How does pricing work?

At DFC, we pride ourselves on a transparent service with no hidden extras. Our pricing model is extremely competitive – we take a flat fee per transaction. This means that no matter what the transaction cost, our pricing will remain stable and our clients never have to concern themselves with inflated rates.

What else can you tell us?

We have onboarded several public and private sector clients recently, as the revenue management value proposition becomes increasingly more understood and important – particularly from a holistic perspective, where the focus is on member acquisition and re-engagement.

GOCARDLESS

What's new?

We're delighted to welcome easyGym and Jetts Fitness as GoCardless customers, as well as HITIO, Be Military Fit, King's College and 1610 Leisure. We're working closely with these businesses to boost payment success rates, improve member experience and simplify direct debit collection.

In other news, GoCardless' global network now covers 70 per cent of the world's recurring payment volume, including the US, as we go live with ACH debit in July. We're also busy developing tools to help customers reduce payment failures further – for example, by automatically rescheduling failed payments. More news on this later in 2019!

How does pricing work?

Business can choose between three different plans: Standard, Plus and Pro. We're transparent with our fees: find out more at gocardless.com/pricing.

What else can you tell us?

We're on a mission to take the pain out of payments for businesses with recurring revenue. This guide covers some of the typical problems and questions our customers come to us with – and how we can help: www.gocardless.com/guides/posts/questions-about-your-direct-debit-solution/ ●

PRODUCT INNOVATION

Lauren Heath-Jones rounds up the products and services launched at FIBO 2019

Keepme revolutionises the approach to member retention, says **Ian Mullane**

Keeptme, a new AI tool for health clubs, is set to increase member retention for gyms.

It provides an intelligence-based approach to member retention and works by analysing individual member

data. That data is then applied to an algorithm which generates a score showing the member's risk of leaving.

The algorithm is capable of identifying patterns of behaviour which correlate with membership exits, and is designed to provide operators with in-depth and actionable insights, enabling them to re-engage the member to prevent the loss.

Stats published by IHRSA show that member subscriptions generate more than 80 per cent of the fitness industry's revenue, reportedly worth £68bn.

With annual membership retention at less than 60 per cent it is vital that clubs have retention strategies in place.



"We've designed the Keepme tool to revolutionise the approach to keeping customers and maximising revenue streams effectively"



Keepme predicts member's risk of leaving

Ian Mullane, Keepme founder, says: "Membership retention is one of the most resource-intensive and time consuming to manage. That's why we've designed

the Keepme tool – to revolutionise the approach to keeping customers."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

KEEPME

Archery training tool, RecoveRing, unites functionality and education, says **Su-Mi Kim**

RecoveRing, a South-Korean company specialising in fitness education and products, has created a tool, also called RecoveRing, to help relax the muscles, improve balance and increase range of motion.

An archery training tool, the RecoveRing is essentially a moulded wooden hoop featuring a number of curves and edges that can be used for multiple purposes, each relating to a different stage in archery.

Pulling relieves tension in the muscles and improves circulation, while holding can enhance range of motion and improve strength and mobility. Releasing reduces muscle



"We believe that fitness equipment must be accompanied by education, so we didn't launch the product until the system was fully developed"

Su-Mi Kim

pain and fatigue. It can also be used in massage to aid muscle recovery following a workout.

Additionally, the company, which was founded by Su-Mi



RecoveRing can be used to increase range of motion

Kim in 2009, has developed an education programme to teach users how to get the most out of the RecoveRing.

Kim says: "We believe that fitness equipment must be accompanied by education, so we didn't launch the

product until the system was fully developed and we strive to educate experts and general users through the content we create," she adds.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

RECOVERING

Jordan HIIT Bench combines unique programming with storage solutions, says **Neil Jordan**

Jordan Fitness, a UK-based supplier of fitness equipment, has launched its new HIIT Bench, a multi-use workout bench which serves as a functional

workout training station, weight bench, plyo box and storage unit.

As a standard, each bench is capable of storing five sets of dumbbells, two kettlebells, a medicine ball and smaller items, such as skipping ropes, power bands and aerobic resistance bands.

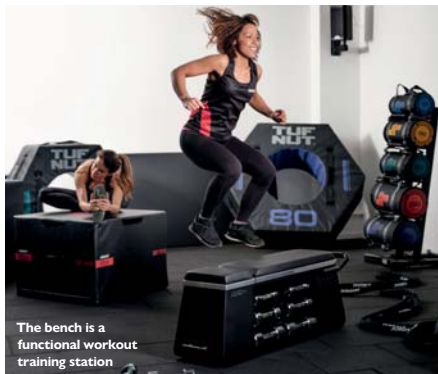
Designed and made in the UK, the HIIT Bench is as solution for smaller boutique gyms and studios, where space is at a premium, but can also be used in larger gyms and workout spaces.

The HIIT Bench is also customisable, giving operators the opportunity to add their logo and select the colour they want.



"We wanted to create something really special using local British manufacturers"

Neil Jordan



The bench is a functional workout training station

Neil Jordan, founder and chair of Jordan Fitness, says: "We wanted to create something really special using local British manufacturers."

"With our gyms and franchise directors

demanding storage solutions and unique programming for their clubs, the opportunity to bring the two together just made sense."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS
JORDAN FITNESS

Firstbeat Lifestyle Assessment the 'key to reducing stress', says **Toby Murray**

Firstbeat, a Finnish company specialising in performance analytics, has developed the Firstbeat Lifestyle Assessment, which uses a Heart Rate Variability (HRV) – the time interval in milliseconds between consecutive heartbeats – to offer participants a snapshot of their stress reactions and

help them to manage stress recovery.

Participants wear a HRV monitoring device which, over the course of three days, measures their stress reactions, physical activity levels, daytime recovery and sleep patterns. A comprehensive report, delivered by a consultant,

gives users a clear idea of how they can improve their stress-recovery balance.

Understanding their HRV gives participants an insight into the way their body functions, and how it reacts to everyday life. Firstbeat's assessment uses this information to map stress, recovery and exercise performance. A report based on these findings is delivered during a consultation with a Firstbeat Assessor. Quarterly retests are recommended to track progress.

The test has recently become available in the UK, with organisations such as the NHS adopting it to help reduce stress levels in their staff.

Toby Murray, director of Wellness Services at Firstbeat UK, says: "The key to reducing stress and improving general wellbeing lies in understanding how your body reacts to certain triggers. By measuring HRV, our technology gives a breakdown of the effects of daily activities on the



"The key to reducing stress and improving general wellbeing lies in understanding how your body reacts to certain triggers"

Toby Murray

body, providing an overall lifestyle assessment of general wellbeing."

"Once you can physically see the visual impact of these stressors, you can put in place measures to tackle stress and keep your mind and body functioning as best as possible to achieve optimum health," Murray adds.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
FIRSTBEAT



The Firstbeat device tracks stress reactions

Shapewatch among the final nine for ActiveLab 'Future of Fit Tech' Awards

Now in its third year, ukactive's ActiveLab is the only accelerator programme in the world designed to support fit-tech startups aiming to transform public health by engaging more people in physical activity and sport

The Shapewatch 3D body visualisation system joined a nine-strong line-up for the judging of the 2019 ActiveLab award in Manchester recently.

Shapewatch offers both static body measurement and dynamic movement assessment in a short, non-invasive, 3D experience that enables health club members to see themselves evolve as they exercise.

Fighting off competition from 70 applicants across 14 countries and six continents to secure a place on the global accelerator programme, Shapewatch has been supported by ActiveLab through a 12-week intensive programme of workshops,

Shapewatch lets members track their body changes



"With its dynamic movement assessment, Shapewatch offers valuable applications for prehabilitation, rehabilitation, wellness and performance"

Alan Loudon

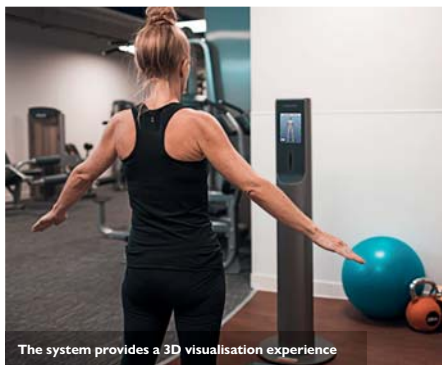
networking and insight, including mentoring from the private sector and experts sharing their experience of scaling tech start-ups internationally.

NEW SOLUTIONS

Outgoing ukactive CEO Steven Ward said: "To overturn the growing physical inactivity crisis facing our world, we need real, innovative solutions. Shapewatch is one of the pioneering startups that will revolutionise the way we move and help us build physical activity into our lives."

Shapewatch sales director, Alan Loudon, said: "With its dynamic movement assessment, Shapewatch offers valuable applications for prehabilitation, rehabilitation, wellness and performance. By reimagining what we can learn from our health, fitness and leisure activities, we can improve the quality of our lives."

"We're honoured to



The system provides a 3D visualisation experience

have been part of this year's ActiveLab and to be among the finalists is a tribute to our technology. The process has been a fantastic stepping stone for Shapewatch,

providing us with brand visibility, market awareness and access to industry experts which will enable us to take our product to the next level."

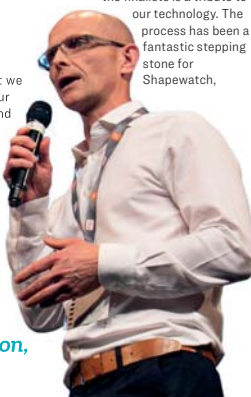
Shapewatch is now looking to work with both operators and other complementary fit-tech providers in the UK to collaborate and explore the opportunities that this technology presents to the health and wellness market.

FIND OUT MORE

If you're interested in finding out more about 3D Body Scanning trial or Dynamic Movement Assessment for your members, please contact enquiries@shapewatch.com

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

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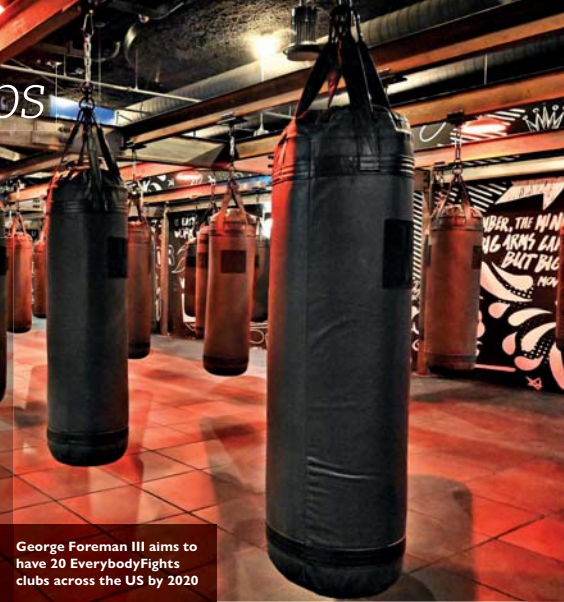


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George Foreman III aims to have 20 EverybodyFights clubs across the US by 2020



George Foreman III

The boxing entrepreneur aims to help people 'unleash the fighter within' to better handle life's challenges, with the slogan, 'It's not yours until you fight for it'

George Foreman III – son of the heavyweight prizefighter – is overseeing the growth of his boxing gym business through owned-operated locations and national and international franchises. The company has backing from Breakaway Ventures.

"We're passionate about helping people everywhere realise their health and fitness goals, and very excited to share the EverybodyFights gym concept across the nation and in select international markets," he said.

WORKING WITH HIS DAD

After a degree in business administration, Foreman III managed his dad's gym business, before training as a professional boxer and opening his own studio.

EverybodyFights, which has locations in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Lexington, US, is driving a nationwide expansion and aiming to have 20 sites open by 2020.

The facilities combine the grit of a traditional boxing gym with luxury amenities and aesthetics.

Clubs typically house between three and five studios and offer boxing, circuit, running, yoga and recovery, with 130 classes a week and 14-plus class types.

Other features include a steamroom, sports shop, and custom graffiti created by Hailey Loonan (EverybodyFights' creative director) and Studio Fresh.

Two franchise offerings are available. The EBF BOX, which enables existing gyms to deliver the EverybodyFights

boxing fitness classes and EBF Club, a standalone facility which provides access to the full EverybodyFights experience and group class programming.

CREATING THE CONCEPT

Talking to HCM, a spokesperson said the concept for the gyms is the result of a partnership between designers Studio Troika, George Foreman III and real estate developer and EverybodyFights co-founder, Anthony 'AJ' Rich.

"George picks out the equipment and lays out the training space," he explained, "While AJ is responsible for the finer design points, including fixtures, furniture, colour, and materials and also the character pieces that have become defining features of EverybodyFights gyms." ●



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