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Martin Seibold

The industry veteran is building a new fitness company **p16**



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Work and work out

A new area for investment in health clubs isn't the studio, the gym, the pool or the spa, it's the co-working space, as consumers increasingly demand their health clubs become their workplace

When premium fitness operator Equinox struck a deal with Industrious – operator of funky co-working spaces – to put furnished workspaces alongside its health clubs, we broke the news on HCMmag.com and the story was our most-read of the week.

As the boundaries between work, leisure, and fitness continue to blur, people are increasingly using their health club or gym as a third space – think of how many laptops you see these days in the juice bar or café – and there's an opportunity to build on this and develop new facilities and revenue streams.

The race is on to grab this new opportunity to extend our reach and become a more important part of people's lives, by installing co-working spaces within health clubs and gyms.

The growth of the gig economy is one of the major factors driving this trend. As more people undertake freelance or contract work and centralised offices shrink in scale, people are looking for somewhere to work which is comfortable and familiar and has the right set-up for remote working.

They want to lead frictionless, seamless lives, where they can achieve flow and remain in environments which are conducive to their mental and physical wellbeing.

We expect to see a new generation of clubs being built which have a range of facilities to enable co-working, such as quiet rooms, hot desks, juice bars, huddle pods, libraries, meeting spaces, podcasting and vlogging facilities, as well as secure wifi and secretarial and concierge services.

If we don't grab this opportunity, then we can expect new competition to head our way in the opposite direction, as the serviced office sector starts to add fitness to its offering.

Co-working space operator We Work, which has just rebranded as the We Company, is launching co-living spaces, gyms, and schools as part of its product lifecycle development.

And with 425 co-working spaces already developed in more than 100 cities and an aggressive development pipeline, it has a strong base on which to build a global fitness offering around its 'Rise by We' fitness and wellbeing brand and offering.

There will be a huge first-mover advantage for fitness businesses which tap into this trend and do it well and soon.

According to property experts JLL, only one per cent of office space is currently classed as co-working or flexible, but this is expected to increase to 30 per cent over the next five



PHOTO: INDUSTRIOUS

Co-working space: the next upsell for health clubs

1% of office space is co-working. This will increase to 30% by 2023 and some of this capacity can be provided by health clubs

years and there's every opportunity for some of this capacity to be provided by the health and fitness industry.

We have a huge flying start – co-working office spaces have to make a significant investment in things like booking and membership systems, direct debit setups, staff hiring and training and facility provision, while we already have all this in place. We also have an existing membership we can upsell.

Demand for these services is already coming from our members and if we respond, we'll find ourselves becoming more embedded in their lives and being more useful and more effective and with a new income stream, to the advantage of all.

Liz Terry, editor
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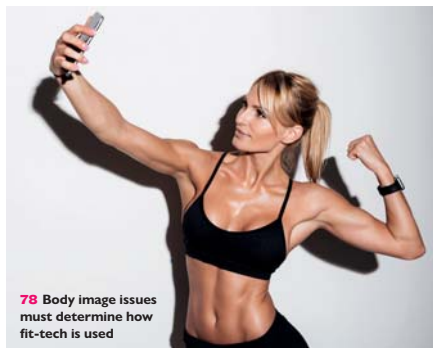




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Industry legend and charity fundraiser Augie Nieto is returning as a co-investor and board member to Life Fitness, where he served as president from 1977 to 2000

MEET THE TEAM



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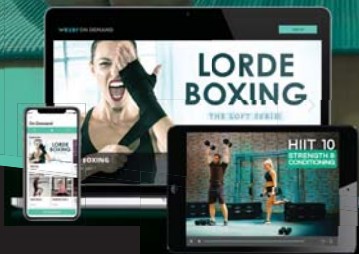


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Bridging the gap between medical and fitness

Joanne Matthews, founder, Ten Health & Fitness

The recent **HCM** news story about how newly-diagnosed cancer patients should be prescribed exercise was music to my ears (see page 28).

The benefits of exercise when it comes to recovery from any major illness or injury is well documented and yet so few people are being given this critical recommendation as part of their recovery.

Some years ago, I recognised this substantial gap in the market and it led to the development of Ten Health & Fitness.

The business was born in the rehab gym where I was recovering from serious injuries sustained in a car accident. The journey between the fitness and medical world was often frustrating, disjointed and entirely my own responsibility to manage.



Joanne Matthews

I persevered and knew this needed to change, given the benefit of exercise on my own recovery.

Today, in the UK alone, over seven million people have cardiovascular disease, 4.5m suffer with diabetes and 2.5m people are living with cancer. The evidence in support of exercise during and after treatment for these conditions is

overwhelming and the benefits to quality of life, both physical and mental, are significant.

For clients with an identified clinical need – particularly following a heart disease, diabetes or cancer diagnosis, a joined-up approach can be critical to recovery.

It's a huge audience and a very real need, but one that the fitness industry in general – whether big-box gyms and boutique providers – is either unwilling or unable to address at anywhere near the scale required.

We all know someone living with a life-changing condition. Fitness facilities need to work more closely with the medical

community to improve outcomes and quality of life for people affected.

Today, TenClinical offers bespoke, scientifically proven exercise prescription in a welcoming, inclusive and empowering boutique, rather than a medical environment. But we're just one operator. Imagine the impact if we could all work together.

June Davis, advisor for allied health professionals at Macmillan Cancer Support, is exactly right when she says we urgently need the Government to invest in the NHS workforce, so that there are enough professionals with the right skills to deliver this sort of care.

“ Fitness facilities need to work more closely with the medical community to improve outcomes and quality of life for people affected ”

A joined-up approach between the medical and fitness worlds can be critical to recovery





The business wasn't getting the numbers needed, so I raised the prices by 25 per cent. It worked and we didn't skip a beat

RICH HUTSON

RICH HUTSON, CEO OF CHI FITNESS AND CO-FOUNDER OF FIRE FITNESS

Tell us about your career

I started as a personal trainer in Canada, teaching women to box. I realised early on that helping people better their lives makes me feel really good.

I moved to Australia for a change, found a job at a gym and got into sales, quickly realising it was something I liked.

A stint at Fitness First in Australia followed, where I helped lead our Asia expansion as FF Asia sales director. After two years I was asked to go to Europe to take on the European sales director role and spent five amazing years there and met my future wife.

Fitness First sold Europe and I came back to Asia where I spent another eight years before parting ways in 2015.

I then partnered with my friend Dave Nuku to start Fire Fitness. After opening our second club I made a decision to find another job, because you can't have two families living off a start-up! I spent six months in Dubai before I was offered my dream role, as CEO at CHI Fitness, which allowed me to come back to Malaysia.

We turned the business around and sold it last September to Evolution Wellness. Now back where I started, working for my old colleagues and friends!

Tell us more about Fire Fitness

We have two clubs in Kuala Lumpur. We were the first boutique fitness operator here. Our marketing and approach were very different – we made a big noise coming into the market and it made people wonder what we were.

Right from the start we had success because of our trainers and the experience that we provide. We run four classes: Stride (HIIT); Ride (cycling); Force (low impact strength); and Strike (boxing).

Our audience is a mix of expats and



Rich Hutson is based in Malaysia

locals. We have a 70/30 split of female to males and a range of ages from millennials to over 60s, which varies by type of class and the trainer. We love the fact we get such a wide range of ages.

How did you turn CHI around?

I had three offers in front of me and I chose the role with CHI because it was the one that got me the most excited. I felt it was time to take a lead role after being in sales and operations for so long, even though I was nervous. I knew the business and believed it could do better.

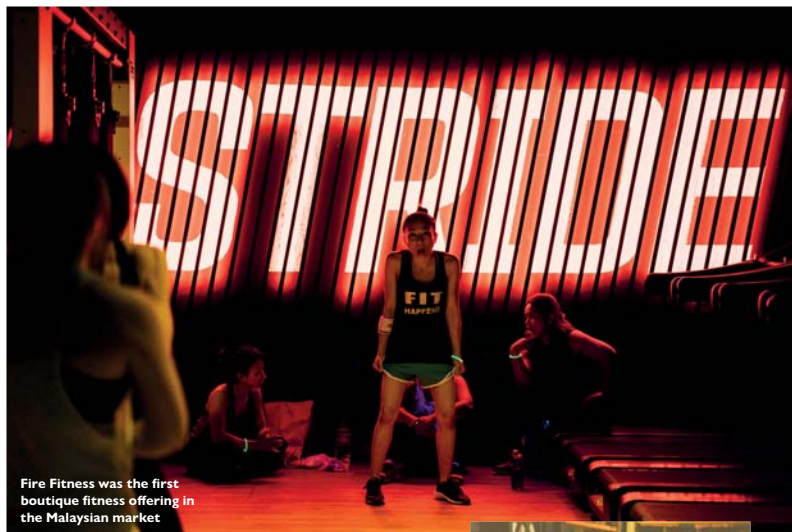
I was transparent about my goal: to put some major results on the board so we could attract investors. This was the key to our future and I wanted every GM to be on-board with the goal and not be nervous if they heard rumours. I wanted to empower them to feel as though they were part of it.

When I looked at the strategy, pricing and what the clubs were offering, I couldn't see how we were going to reach our goals. The business was trying to run a budget model but was a full-service offering.

It wasn't getting the numbers needed, so I raised the prices by 25 per cent. It worked and we didn't skip a beat.

Hutson raised prices and sold struggling clubs to turn CHI around







Fire offers four group fitness classes: Stride, Ride, Force and Strike

- This gave the team confidence and confirmed that their clubs were worth it.

We also closed our struggling clubs. We started with 20 and worked our way down to 13 and we make triple the EBITDA. It's mind blowing how much time you can spend on clubs that are losing money, and this just takes away your time from building the future.

What's the potential in Asia?

It's an exciting time to be in here as there's considerable growth to come.

The greatest challenge is finding a way to cater to the less affluent. In many parts of Asia you see a wide gap between those who can afford fitness and those who can't. Catering to those less well-off is an opportunity worth pursuing.

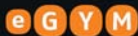
The level of instruction in many clubs isn't yet near the standard it needs to be. In most Asian countries there's no governing body setting standard for qualifications, so anyone can walk off the street and say they're a trainer.

What's your career taught you?

It's taught me to take chances in life and business. I've left what I'd consider 'home' more times than I can count and have loved every moment – win or lose.

I've worked in 17 countries and lived in a further seven, and don't regret a single move, as everything has provided me with amazing experiences.





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Gathering existing, strong brands under one roof to create the new Life Fit Group made perfect sense

MARTIN SEIBOLD

CEO LIFE FIT GROUP

The newly-launched Life Fit Group aims to have a presence in each of Germany's booming fitness segments. CEO Martin Seibold says reviving the fortunes of Fitness First acted as the starting gun for the business.

Seibold is becoming somewhat of a turnaround specialist. In 2006, the then MD of Fitness First Germany was transferred to Fitness First UK, named

its COO and tasked with turning the business around. After a successful two-year project, he was rewarded with a promotion to a global role.

When the UK business found itself in trouble again just a few years later, its private equity owner Oaktree Capital called Seibold back – this time as MD. Between 2012 and 2017 he again revived Fitness First UK, this time through a £40m+ transformation programme that

repositioned the chain by nudging it upmarket and reducing the estate from 185 clubs to just 65.

After helping Oaktree sell the UK business to DW Fitness in 2016 he was then – in May 2017 – called on to perform a similar turnaround of Fitness First Germany.

In the two years since, he and the teams across the clubs haven't as much resuscitated the business, as fitted it with ►



Seibold has turned Fitness First Germany from an outdated offering to one at the forefront of innovation



After turning around Fitness First UK, Seibold was called back to do the same in Germany



Seibold and the teams across all the Fitness First Germany clubs have resuscitated the business

- new organs and given it a new purpose in life. What started as a three-year plan to prepare the estate for sale has become a long-term project to create a multi-brand group of companies featuring best-in-class operations in a number of vertical markets.

CHANGING DIRECTION

"Three years ago Fitness First Germany was in a very difficult state," Seibold says. "There was no clear vision or philosophy, and there was confusion over what the strategy was."

"There had been attempts to introduce new services and enter new segments – such as the launch of a boutique offering, efforts to move into the mind and body segment and to enter the digital space. But these had led to a further loss of focus on what the core product was."

"There wasn't any innovation at the clubs either. The estate had some great locations and people, but the sites were full of outdated equipment."

Seibold set out to modernise the network. Most of the changes he instigated were simple – such as ditching the 'garish brown and magenta' colour scheme, installing wifi access at every club and making sure equipment and programming were brought up to date.



In total, €15m was spent across the 60+-strong club portfolio, while around €6m of 'unnecessary costs' were taken out of the operation.

"Within 18 months we'd turned Fitness First Germany from an operator with an outdated offer to one which is at the forefront of innovation," Seibold said of the changes. "Our strategy was to be the operator that gets there first when it comes to new kit."

CHOOSING A FUTURE PATH

Once it was clear the company was back on track, its private equity owner Oaktree Capital was faced with a choice: what to do next? Should it continue to prepare the estate for sale, or adopt a different approach?

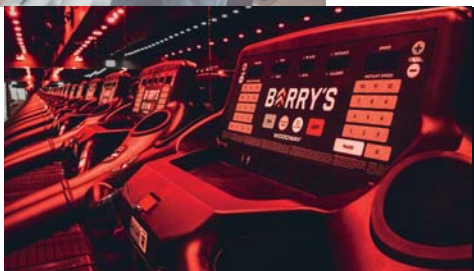
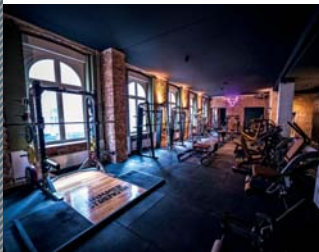
During discussions, an option which had recently been tested – and proven – on the other side of the world was brought up.

"I sat down with Federico Alvarez-Demalde, the senior VP at Oaktree, to consider our options," Seibold says. "He suggested that we might want to look at how Greg Oliver had grown a portfolio of fitness brands in Australia."

Oaktree was very familiar with Oliver's Fitness & Lifestyle Group (FLG). Oaktree had sold Fitness First Australia to FLG in 2016 and kept a minority stake in the business. Since then, FLG has acquired a number of operators and become Asia-Pacific's largest diversified fitness and wellness group with a portfolio that includes nine brands and around 500 sites.



Fitness First Germany's private equity owner, Oaktree Capital, decided to build a diverse portfolio of fitness brands



Seibold recalls the conversation: "Federico said 'Martin, fly to Australia and speak to Greg and his team. Check it out. If you come back and say that we can do in Germany what they've done there, we'll go for it.'"

STUDY VISIT

Seibold visited FLG in May 2018, spoke to Oliver and met the MDs of all the individual brands.

"It was an eye-opener," Seibold says. "Gathering existing, strong brands under one roof made perfect sense."

"Firstly, they could centralise a lot of the processes and leverage the cost base. Secondly, they were able to offer consumers recognised premium, budget and boutique studios without the need to build separate brands from scratch."

"Thirdly, it offered them flexibility in organising the estate. FLG had converted and 'downgraded' some of the smaller Fitness First clubs to run under the Goodlife brand – but also upgraded some of the larger Goodlife site to be branded Fitness First."

Seibold had made up his mind. "I came back, sat down with Oaktree and said 'guys, we have to do this.'"

GROWING AS A GROUP

Within six months of returning from his fact-finding mission, Seibold – with strong support from Oaktree – had negotiated the first deal. In December 2018, Fitness First acquired elbgym – a highly-regarded regional operator with three gyms in the city of Hamburg.

This was followed by the securing of rights to operate Barry's Bootcamp in Germany and a deal to bring Dutch operator The Gym Society – headed by industry veteran Frank Polman – to Germany. Most recently, in July, a deal was struck to acquire budget operator Smile X and its 17 sites. The six-strong portfolio of companies is completed by the addition of digital fitness app NewMoove.

A new company – Life Fit Group – was then set up to oversee the six different brands, with Seibold named as CEO. The next stage will see the group expand in each segment.

Seibold says Frank Polman will be an asset in growing the business, due to his franchising experience gained from spreading the Curves brand across Europe. "We're looking to franchise Elbgym, so its MD, Wilhelm Schröter, will

be able to meet regularly with Frank and discuss strategy," Seibold says.

"That's the beauty of what we're doing – we aren't just adding best-in-class brands, we are gathering best-in-class knowhow. As well as Frank's franchising expertise, we have the boutique prowess of Barry's Bootcamp and a deep understanding of the German budget market through Smile X and its strong management team, headed by Christian Müller."

"Life Fit's management structure will reflect this – we'll establish a round table system, where the individual CEOs of the companies come together to discuss our forward plans and to share their experiences."

As Life Fit prepares for the next, exciting stage, Seibold is keen to highlight the role played by Oaktree Capital – and especially Federico Alvarez-Demalde and his team. "As owners, they have been incredibly supportive and crucial in making this happen," Seibold says.

"Without Oaktree and its trust in me, our team and this process, it would not have been possible. The relationship we have is a great example of how private equity ownership can work and be a positive force in business." ●



Your marketing department will have to start writing ad copy for robots, not for humans. These digital agents will be gatekeepers, a bit like a PA. It's already happening, so get ahead and start using it

ANDREW GRILL

PRACTICAL FUTURIST



Digital agents will take over the mundane, replicable chores of life, says Grill

Practical futurist Andrew Grill spoke at Technogym's 2019 Digital Transformation Event recently. He shares insights with HCM

“**E**veryone in this industry wants to improve things for the consumer,” says Andrew Grill. “I’d like you to consider three benefits to embracing digital: efficiency, effectiveness, and disruption. With just a few changes, you can start using digital to create better experiences for customers, so they stick with you longer.”

“Disruption happens when there are profits to be made, when there’s new tech available, and consumer demand forces change,” he says. “Every company needs to disrupt itself if it wants to adapt.”

LIVE CUSTOMERS OR DIGITAL AGENTS?

Our smartphones already know about our preferences and our routines. Grill predicts we’re not far away from having “digital agents” in everyday life.

“Smartphone data plus developments in Artificial Intelligence will lead to the creation of digital agents,” he said. “These will take over the mundane, replicable chores of life. Your customers will soon use digital agents to book classes, or to ask about membership, for example.”

“This means your marketing department will have to start writing ad copy for robots, not for humans. Digital agents will be gatekeepers, a bit like a PA. It’s already happening, so get ahead and start using it.”

BIG CHANGES IN DATA

“Thanks to APIs, we can give other systems access to our data and let them process it. Make sure you can share data with anyone you work with. Do you have an API, and do you ask if partners and suppliers have an API strategy?”

“On the data front, GDPR is forcing us to sift through data to see what is relevant,” he said. “Think about the value exchange – why should customers give you their data? They have to trust you and know you’ll offer them something in return.”

THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

“Data is powerful, and the customer knows it,” he says. “They can leave a gym any time, taking their data with them. This gives them the upper hand.” ▶



**Andrew Grill spoke at
Technogym's Digital
Transformation Event**



Grill said every company needs to disrupt itself if it wants to adapt

FOUR THINGS TO DO RIGHT NOW

ANDREW GRILL'S CHECKLIST

1 DIGITAL DIVERSITY

Make sure your business hires people with digital skills at management level. They need a fundamental understanding of how digital can change your business, and can tell you how millennials (and older customers) are thinking about digital innovations.



2 EDUCATE YOURSELF

To get digital, you need to be digital. So get curious about this stuff. Don't be put off by it. Challenge yourself to learn more about upcoming trends and digital terms, rather than getting scared off by the hype.

3 DATA AUDIT

Data is powerful, and you can probably be making more of it. Understand what data you have, what you need, and what your customers have.



4 FUTUREPROOF YOUR BUSINESS

Make sure you have connectivity between your own systems (apps, fitness platforms, CRM) and those of your partners and suppliers. You need an API for easy data transfer.



► Forward thinking facilities will use data to create a consumer experience that keeps people coming back."

"Operators capture an enviable amount of data, but not everyone knows what to do with it - or even how much they have," says Grill. "It goes beyond which products are popular, how long people stay, and what time of day different areas of the gym are busy."

"At the end of 2016, Transport for London carried out a trial, tracking travellers' wifi use on the tube network. In just four weeks, they captured valuable data about journey times, routes, and commuter decisions. What could you learn from analysing wifi use in your facility?"

"A lot of data is proprietary, and you can only access it by asking the customer's permission," he explains. "This is a compelling reason for gym owners to buy digital. How can you work with fitness kit, and digital platforms like Technogym mywellness cloud, to access data and make it work for you and your customer?"

"The more you can know about your users between gym visits, the more you can give them a reason to stay. Use data to make the entire customer journey work seamlessly, so they have no reason to go anywhere else."

"With a focus on increasing the length of gym memberships, data offers us a powerful way to create personalised customer journeys to extend retention and encourage loyalty." ●

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International news

Crunch gets investment from TPG private equity

Crunch Fitness could double in size over the next five years, according to CEO Jim Rowley, following investment in the fitness chain by private equity group TPG.



The investment is a testament to Crunch's brand

Jim Rowley

The company owns, operates and franchises more than 300 fitness centres across the US, Canada, Australia and Spain, serving 1.3 million members.

It has a franchise division with 88 operators, as well as its Crunch-owned Signature clubs in urban markets such as New York, Miami, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Both sides of the business are set for growth over the next three to five years, said Rowley.

"The investment from TPG is a testament to Crunch's brand, facilities, and management and club teams," Rowley added. "We've been able to create a fun,



Crunch Fitness has 1.3m members across its 300 clubs

team-focused, and fitness-minded atmosphere that our members and franchise partners embrace and enjoy."

Rowley and chair Mark Mastrov acquired Crunch with the backing of the private equity arm of Angelo Gordon in 2009, and began franchising the brand in 2010.

Previously, the two had built the 24 Hour Fitness brand.

Crunch's business model looks to provide high-quality cardio and strength equipment, group classes and personalised training at a compelling price point.

More: http://lei.sr/7H6C5_H

Basic-Fit's portfolio grows to 687 clubs with the Fitland acquisition

Basic-Fit, one of the biggest fitness operators in Europe, has confirmed the completion of its acquisition of Fitland, the Netherlands' third-largest fitness operator.

Details of the deal were first revealed in April.

Rene Moos, CEO of Basic-Fit, said the acquisition will secure the company's leading position in the Dutch market. "We are pleased to add the Fitland clubs to our existing network of 161 clubs and believe this acquisition is attractive to shareholders, members and employees of both Fitland and Basic-Fit."

The buyout will increase Basic-Fit's 650-strong



Basic-Fit has two million members across Europe

portfolio of clubs to 687, as it adds Fitland's 37 mid-market fitness clubs to the business.

Basic-Fit operates on a high-quality, value for money

basis with a membership model that has attracted two million members. It's currently operating in five European countries.

Moos said Basic-Fit will rebrand and refurbish about 30 of the clubs and sell off the remainder, giving it a network in the Netherlands of close to 200 clubs.



We are pleased to add Fitland to our network

Rene Moos

More: http://lei.sr/s3N8p_H

Equinox opens long-awaited New York wellness hotel

High-end fitness giant Equinox has ventured into the hotel market with the opening of its first property in New York City, US.

The company plans to build a billion dollar hotel business.

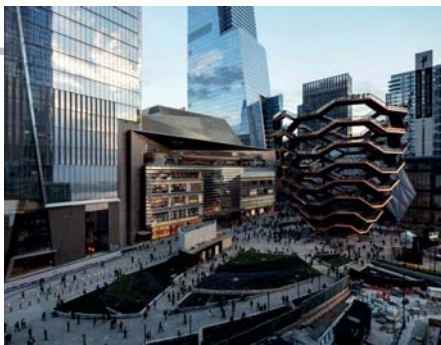
Located at the 72-storey skyscraper 35 Hudson Yards, the 212-bedroom hotel will focus on wellness.

The on-site, 60,000sq ft (5,574 sq m) Equinox Fitness Club – designed by famed architect Joyce Wang – will be the brand's largest ever and each hotel guest will be given temporary Equinox health club memberships, for the length of their stay.

As well as the large gym floor, the club will offer personal training and group fitness classes, including HIIT, barre and yoga. There will also be a SoulCycle boutique indoor cycling studio on the hotel's ground floor.

Other facilities include a 27,000sq ft (2,500sq m) luxury spa and indoor and outdoor pools. There will also be a healthy-eating restaurant called Electric Lemon, created by restaurateur Stephen Starr – famous for his "clean-eating" concept.

The interior design of the hotel, by architecture firm Rockwell Group, has been based on the concept of



The Equinox hotel has a gym, spa and SoulCycle studio

high-performance living, with the range of wellness services on offer ranging from a resident "sleep coach" to cryotherapy chambers and IV drips at the spa.

Equinox's global portfolio includes 100 fitness clubs across the US, UK, and Canada. It plans to launch additional hotels across the US over the next four years.

Its dive into the multi-billion dollar wellness hospitality sector is a significant addition to Hudson Yards, which has been built by Equinox owner, Related Companies.

The project is described as "the largest private real estate development in the history of the US".

More: http://lei.sr/K6E3t_H

Holmes Place founder takes a controlling stake in TRIB3

Industry veterans Allan and Jonathan Fisher have completed a Series A capital investment deal in boutique fitness and franchise brand TRIB3, which has seen them acquire a controlling stake in the business.

Allan Fisher is the founder of premium health club operator Holmes Place, which he continues to be involved in today. Together with his son Jonathan, the pair also operate the low-cost brand ICON.

The Fishers' activities in the fitness sector span a period of more than 40 years and include the recent rollout of



We hope to help TRIB3 achieve its aspirations

Allan Fisher

boutique chain EVO in Europe.

Following the deal, the Fishers will join TRIB3's board of directors, with Jonathan becoming chair. TRIB3 co-founder Kevin Yates will



TRIB3 currently has nine locations in five countries

continue in his role as CEO.

"TRIB3 is arguably offering one of the most exciting and motivational workout experiences in the booming boutique segment of the

market," said Allan Fisher.

"We're hopeful our connections and experience will help TRIB3 become a

More: http://lei.sr/h8A9g_H

Private equity firm Bridges acquires énergie Fitness

Bridges Fund Management has completed a deal to buy franchise gym operator, énergie Fitness.

The private equity firm has acquired a majority stake for an initial consideration, with an earn-out based on énergie continuing to hit its targets for the 2019 and 2020 financial years. The numbers have not been released at this point.

The current énergie management team, led by



Bridges has plans that will enable us to accelerate our growth plans

Jan Spaticchia



énergie has prepared for the sale for the past two years

CEO Neil King, will stay in place following the deal, while founder and chair Jan Spaticchia will reinvest and remain with the business as a shareholder and non-executive director.

Speaking exclusively to HCM, Spaticchia said: "This is a proud day for énergie, its franchisees, staff and shareholders. Bridges has plans that will enable us to

accelerate our growth plans as we leverage our position as the market-leading, low-cost fitness franchisor.

Most importantly, Bridges is committed to the culture of inclusion that has been at the centre of énergie's mission since we formed the company a decade ago."

More: http://lei.sr/x7Q8N_H

School Activity Action Plan to increase exercise opportunities

UK children will be offered a greater opportunity to take part in 60 minutes of daily sport and physical activity under new government plans.

The *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*, outlined by former education secretary Damian

Hinds and former sport minister Mims Davies, will set out a range of new measures to strengthen the role of sport within a young person's daily routine.

It will also promote a joined-up approach to activity and mental wellbeing.

Under the plan, schools and sports clubs will be encouraged to work together to share their facilities and expertise, giving more pupils access to competitive sport and volunteering opportunities.

There will be a focus on ensuring boys and girls have an equal and coordinated offer of sport, competition and activity, including modern PE lessons and access to high-quality clubs and competitions after school and during weekends and holidays. As part of the plan, the government will launch a series of regional pilots to trial "innovative approaches".

The pilots will be joint-funded by the DCMS through Sport England and will run from September 2020. Details on the specific actions will be published later this year.



I urge schools to put sport and physical activity at the heart of the school day

Mims Davies

"I urge schools to put sport and physical activity at the heart of every school day, creating a cultural shift where it becomes routine in the daily lives of young people," said Mims Davies. "Our plan will help shift the dial in school sport - making lessons more fun and engaging."

More: http://lei.sr/c5N8E_H



The plan outlines an equal offer of sport for boys and girls

Duncan Bannatyne takes back the reins at Bannatyne Fitness

Duncan Bannatyne is to return to frontline involvement in the health club, spa and hotel business that bears his name, as current CEO, Justin Musgrove, announces his departure for a new role in the Middle East.

Bannatyne, who will become executive chair, said he was "thrilled to be back at the frontline, leading the business at a time of great excitement in the UK economy".

He told HCM: "Our CEO, Justin Musgrove, has done a great job in the last five years and we wish him well as he embarks on a new career in the Middle East. He leaves the business in fine fettle and I will enjoy running it again in a more hands-on role."

Bannatyne added that, following this period of investment, the business is expected to maintain its growth and profits. It currently has around 210,000 members.



Bannatyne said he looks forward to returning to the "front line"

Bannatyne Group has a portfolio of 72 health clubs, 47 spas and four hotels, boasting a turnover of £127.5m in the year to December 2018 in its latest results. This figure represents

growth of 8.5 per cent on its 2017 results (£117.6m). Profit improved slightly, from £14.3m to £14.6m.

More: http://lei.sr/v7m2t_H

David Lloyd to have trainer aged 55 or over in every club

David Lloyd Clubs (DLC) has revealed plans to become the first fitness operator to commit to having a fitness trainer aged 55 or over in every one of its clubs by the end of 2022.

The move has been designed to attract more older people to DLC clubs by offering them support from fitness professionals they can

more easily relate to.

It follows recent research by Public Health England and ukactive, which revealed that older age groups feel more self-conscious when exercising in public and, as a result, work out less often than other age groups.

As part of the commitment, DLC – which is set to open its 100th club in the UK later this year – is introducing a training programme designed to empower all of its fitness teams to deliver support to its older members.

Teams will receive education on developing confidence and motivation, offering nutritional advice and creating individual training programmes to suit specific needs. To coincide with the announcement, DLC has also published a new report – called *The Age*

of Activity – which looks at the attitudes of the over-55s toward exercise and fitness, combining original research with personal stories and the insights of experts.

Glenn Earlam, CEO, David Lloyd Clubs, said: "As our population continues to age,

we truly believe it's our social duty to do this and we hope the rest of the sector will follow our example. Our whole ethos is to welcome all ages and it's something we pride ourselves on."

More: http://lei.sr/R2J6N_H



We hope the rest of the sector will follow our example

Glenn Earlam



The move has been designed to attract more older members

Huw Edwards appointed CEO of ukactive

The ukactive board has named Huw Edwards as the not-for-profit body's permanent chief executive.

Edwards, who has overseen ukactive operations as acting CEO since April, will take up the role with immediate effect. He succeeds former CEO Steven Ward, who announced in February 2019 that he would leave the organisation after 13 years.

Edwards first joined ukactive as director of public affairs in April 2016 and was then named director of public affairs, communications and research in January 2018. In his role, he played an integral

role in the development of the organisation's new four-year business plan.

"The strength of this organisation comes from its members, and we have



The strength of this organisation comes from its members

Huw Edwards



Edwards takes up the role of CEO with immediate effect

a great team at ukactive who will continue to work tirelessly to support and advise our membership base, while also providing them with a powerful voice in

government," Edwards said. "I look forward to working with partners across the whole physical activity sector."

More: http://lei.sr/N9P7e_H

Elite gym to form cornerstone of wellness offering at Grantley Hall

The Grade II listed, 17th century Grantley Hall hotel and wellness retreat has reopened near Ripon, UK.

The property has undergone extensive renovation work over a three-and-a-half year period, with design by owner Valeria

Sykes and now has a high-end gym, spa and a range of restaurants. The overarching vision is for the hotel to become one of Europe's top gym and wellness facilities.

The hotel's Elite executive gym and wellness centre has three fitness spaces:

a fully-equipped gym, a strength and conditioning gym and a health and performance area, which includes the Randox Health Lab. This offers high-level testing and analysis, biometric machines, a cryotherapy chamber and three altitude-enabled compact training rooms, including one with an H20 underwater treadmill.

There's also a multi-discipline studio and spin room that enables classes to be delivered at altitude.

The gym will be managed by competitive athlete and former Royal Engineer, Duncan Roy.

"To achieve our aim of turning Grantley Hall



We searched for the best equipment on the market

Duncan Roy

into a truly outstanding wellness retreat, we did an in-depth search for the best equipment on the market that could make a real difference and set us apart from others," he said.

More: http://lei.sr/r8K8c_H



Grantley Hall's renovation has taken three years to complete

People will pay more to live near a great gym, according to Colliers

Research from property experts at Colliers International suggests people are increasingly willing to pay more in rent or mortgage to live near their favourite gym.

The study of 3,000 people in the UK found that 72 per cent of those asked responded positively to this hypothetical situation, while 29 per cent said they'd be prepared to pay more in membership fees for a rooftop gym.

"Being close to good schools or transport links used to be the top priorities when buying a house, but now gyms are a key driver," said Ross Kirton, head of UK

leisure agency at Colliers International.

"Investors and landlords now have the opportunity to start thinking creatively about the way gyms are



Gyms have become a key driver for people buying houses

Ross Kirton



The G-Cubed gym and rooftop garden amenity space by SOM

incorporated into wider mixed-use and residential developments." An example of this, the research identifies, is the partnership between Hero Fitness and Moda Living

in Manchester, where a range of fitness and wellness services have been included in residential projects.

More: http://lei.sr/C3m8V_H

Newly diagnosed cancer patients should be prescribed fitness plans

Leading UK cancer charities

have called for those newly diagnosed to be prescribed exercise and nutrition plans, in order to help their recovery.

Macmillan Cancer Support, the Royal College of Anaesthetists, the National Institute for Health Research

Cancer and Nutrition Collaboration have published a report calling for changes to the delivery of cancer care. The quartet wants greater focus to be placed on prehabilitation – including nutrition, physical activity and psychological support.

The report calls for more targeted interventions



Recommendations in the *Prehabilitation for people with cancer* report include providing interventions targeted at improving physical and/or mental health – and for them to start as early as possible.

It also states that prehabilitation – as a component of rehabilitation – should underpin the whole cancer pathway and is an approach that should be adopted for all people with cancer.

Dr Lucy Allen, head of collaborations, National Institute of Health Research, added: "Put simply, being physically, nutritionally and psychologically 'unfit' is associated with increased



Being unfit is associated with increased risks during treatment

Lucy Allen

risks and complications during treatment.

"The challenge, therefore, is to identify those who are at risk and prepare them ahead of their treatment."

More: http://lei.sr/Q6P6C_H

Exercise boosts brain function in overweight individuals

Exercise has the ability to improve brain function in overweight individuals. University of Tübingen in Germany studied a group of overweight or obese (an average BMI of 31) people, who underwent two brain scans before and after an eight-week exercise intervention.

Previous studies have shown that overweight individuals are prone to insulin resistance in the brain, where it provides information about current nutritional status.

Led by Dr. Stephanie Kullmann, researchers at

Tübingen wanted to know whether exercise can improve insulin sensitivity in the brain and improve cognition.



The bottom line is that exercise improves brain function

Stephanie Kullmann



The research measured brain function before and after exercise

"The bottom line is that exercise improves brain function," said Kullmann.

"And increasing insulin sensitivity in dopamine-related brain regions through

exercise may help decrease the risk of a person to develop type 2 diabetes, along with benefits on mood."

More: http://lei.sr/f5h7d_H

Social media and AI used to gain insight to people's exercise habits

Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) has combined social media posts and machine learning to chart entire populations' exercise habits.

BUSPH researchers combed through exercise-related tweets from across the US

and analysed the language of the tweets to uncover how different populations feel about exercise.

The researchers used a set of AI models to analyse 1.38m relevant tweets by 481,146 individual Twitter users in 2,900 US counties. By doing

so, researchers were able to unpack regional and gender differences in exercise types and intensity levels.

According to Dr. Elaine Nsoesie, assistant professor of global health at BUSPH, the research unearthed insight that could be used to make populations more active.

"By understanding differences in how people are exercising, we can design interventions that target the specific needs of those communities," Nsoesie said.

"The study showed that, in most cases, lower-income communities tend to lack access to resources that encourage a healthy lifestyle."

Dr. Nina Cesare, study senior author at BUSPH,



By understanding how people exercise, we can design interventions that target specific needs

Elaine Nsoesie

added: "In the future, social media and other digital data could help create interventions and policies informed by the habits of these communities."

More: http://lei.sr/d8X5Z_H

AI was used to analyse more than 1.38m relevant tweets





14
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Events calendar



PHOTO: LUCATIME

Darcy Bussell launched last year's National Fitness Day with a mass dance workout in the heart of London

AUGUST 2019

22-24 | FIBO China

National Exhibition & Convention Centre, Shanghai, China

Fibo China is an international trade show and event that connects China's fitness industry to international development trends, and accelerates and promotes 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 topics including business strategy, customer service and management. The Expo floor offers the latest spa and wellness products. www.experienceispa.com

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

Started by énergie Fitness and now organised by ukactive, this event sees fitness providers across the UK open their doors for free to allow members of the public to try out fitness activities. www.nationalfitnessday.com



The ISPA Conference and Expo takes place in Las Vegas

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



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Lead Financial Advisor		Acquisition of The Club Company by Epiris LLP UK	Deloitte.
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Lead Financial Advisor		Acquisition of Fitness World by FSN Capital Denmark	Deloitte.
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Lead Financial Advisor		Acquisition of Ingosport by Torreal Spain	Deloitte.
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Sector Insight	European Health & Fitness market report	Deloitte.
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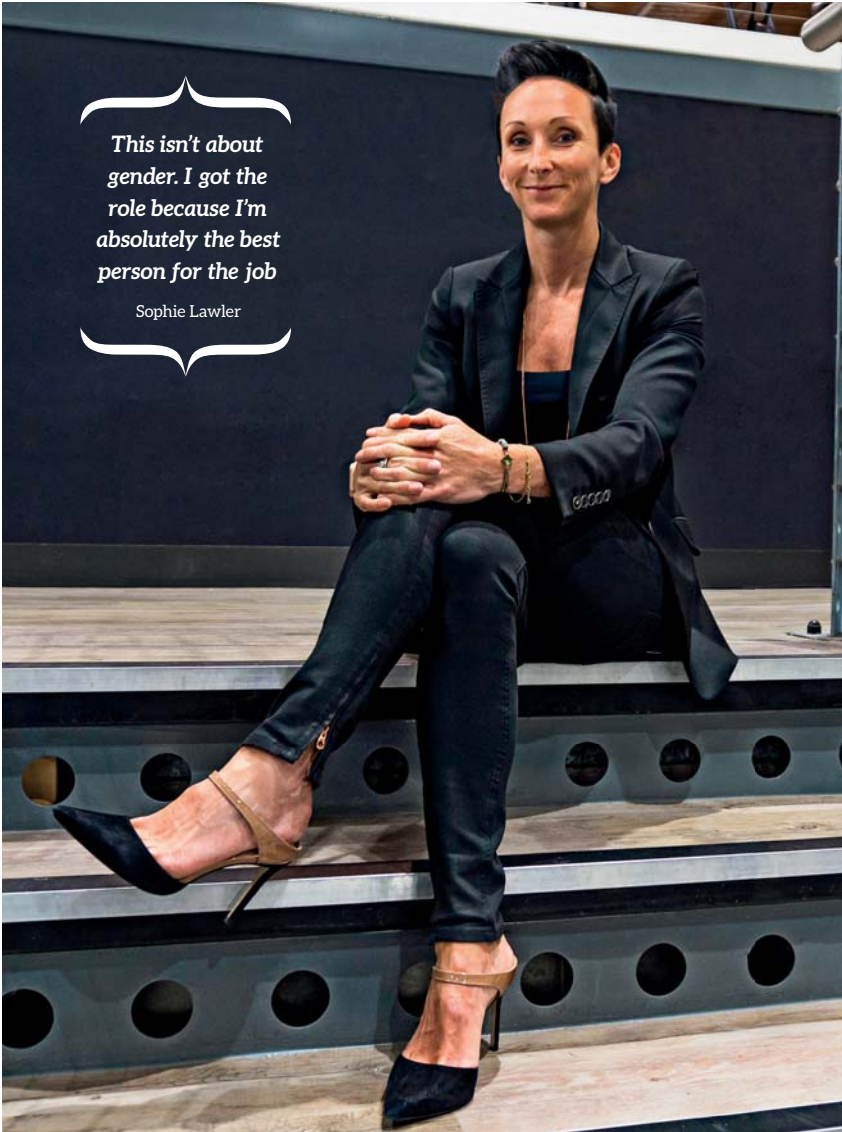
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A woman with short dark hair, wearing a black blazer, black pants, and black pointed-toe pumps with tan straps, is sitting on a set of industrial stairs. She has her hands clasped in her lap and is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a dark, textured wall.

*This isn't about
gender. I got the
role because I'm
absolutely the best
person for the job*

Sophie Lawler

Sophie Lawler began her fitness career as an instructor with Total Fitness. Twenty years later she became its CEO



SOPHIE LAWLER

**Business growth through culture change, new clubs in the offing,
and a passionate belief in the importance of the middle market.**

The CEO of Total Fitness in the UK talks to Kate Cracknell

T

here's an awful lot about my Total Fitness journey that feels down to fate," says CEO Sophie Lawler as she explains how, 20 years ago, she first started her fitness career with the operator, working as an instructor and membership consultant to pay her rent while studying.

"The majority of my journey was in fact with Fitness First, both in the UK and internationally," she continues. "By the time I stepped down in November 2017, I had all the battle scars of the mid-market. We'd gone through significant growth, a huge restructure, a massive turnaround, the sale of the business... I knew I'd developed a large skill set that was likely to be transferrable, and as teams began to consolidate and our management roles naturally came to an end, I decided to take some time to work out what really drove me.

"I started picking up consultancy projects for distressed, multi-site businesses in other sectors – casual dining and retail – as I felt it might be time to move out of fitness. But then I had a conversation with someone who mentioned a new CEO at Total Fitness. I knew the business well and felt I had a lot of insight to share, so I looked him up on LinkedIn and it turned out he'd studied the same degree – politics – at the same university as me, at the same time as me, so I dropped him a note inviting him to meet for coffee.

"When we met, I offered to do three to six months' work on a day rate basis and it snowballed from there. It turned out that he, Rob Payne, was interim and about to step down. I then got a call from the shareholders – North Edge Capital – to meet with them, and I found their approach so very different and so refreshing for a private equity house. They



Total Fitness aims to offer a low cost, full service product to as many people as possible

- were clearly looking to set me up for success in what would be a first-time CEO role for me."

A LASTING LOVE AFFAIR

She continues: "The other selling point was the fact it was Total Fitness. It was a tough gig, but I quickly remembered why I loved the business 20 years ago. It's a high volume, mass market product that brings full service to as many people as possible – at the lowest possible cost to the consumer, in difficult marketplaces – because everybody deserves that."

"I also remembered why, even 20 years ago, I could see how the business would get tough. Delivering full service at the lowest possible cost is exceptionally difficult, and the changes in the market over the last 10 years have added further complexity. Factor in the macro-economic stuff too and it makes for something that's very difficult, but very compelling."

"When I left Fitness First, I took with me grit, resilience and a real belief in the purpose of a middle market product. There's so much opportunity. It would have been too frustrating not to have taken the role."

"The only thing standing in the way was me. I didn't know I could be a leader. I held a limiting belief that funnily enough had resulted from some positive feedback from previous management. I had been told I was a great Number Two. 'I couldn't do it without you, Sophie, you're a brilliant Number Two'."

"It took numerous conversations with industry people I trusted – Steve Ward [former ukactive CEO] and David Langridge, formerly of Fitness First and now MD of 1FitLife, among them – to realise I

could be more than that. They asked me what it was about the CEO role I thought I couldn't do, and I didn't have an answer apart from being scared."

"So that was that. I became CEO of Total Fitness, and the first and only female CEO in the UK commercial fitness sector. But this isn't about gender. I got the role because I'm absolutely the best person for the job."

A PLANE WITH ONE ENGINE

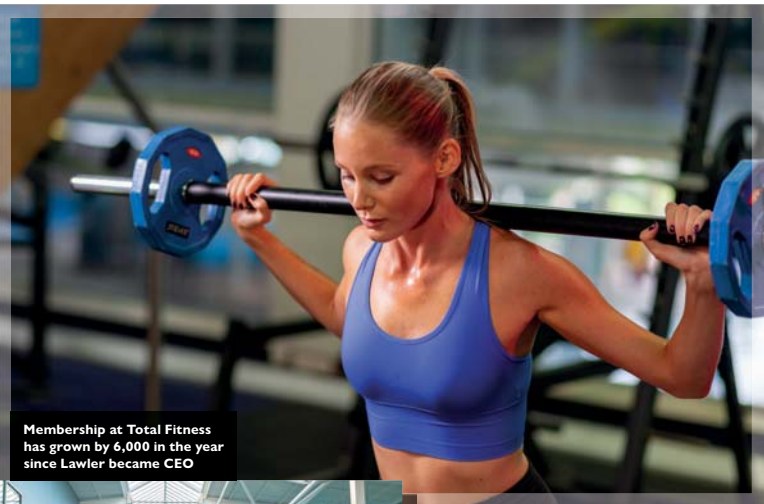
The results already being delivered at Total Fitness, just one year on from Lawler joining as CEO, pay witness to this: member NPS is up from 17 to an all-time high of almost 50, while membership has grown by 6,000 over the year. ►



Lawler and operations director Paul McNicholas are working to enhance Total Fitness



*Our industry starts
and ends with
people, so I spent
my first three weeks
visiting our clubs
and listening*



Membership at Total Fitness has grown by 6,000 in the year since Lawler became CEO



- "To put that in context, it's like having another club," observes Lawler. "At the close of May, we reached 90,500 fully subscribed (paying) members; we're servicing 100,000. This higher number includes our teams, their families and populations like our 80+-year-old members who train for free; we have age-related membership prices."

So, what changes has Lawler implemented to bring about this change in fortunes?

"Our industry starts and ends with people, so I spent my first three weeks visiting our clubs and listening. All my strategic assumptions about the challenges in the business – the commercial model, the operating model, the leverage of the business – turned out to be accurate. But the unknown quantity, and the awesome surprise, lay in our teams. They had immense pride and positive intent. The pride was very local – not much pride for HQ, and very little engagement with the business as a whole – but nevertheless it was something to work with.

"It was clear to me that the embedded performance potential of the business lay in its people, if I could just engage them. But I wanted to be able to quantify things, so I worked

with a former colleague and now founder of Coachopolis, Neil Tune, to do some maths around our people.

"I had around 650 employed staff, but with some part-time that equated to 510 full-time equivalent. We then looked at their service profile – how long people had been with the business – because that very much defines how effective someone can be in their role, in terms of hard skills. We made an assumption that, if you've been in-role for a year, you can be autonomous and competent – but more than half my workforce, 58 per cent, had been in-role for less than 12 months.

"We made a few more assumptions: that if you've been in role for six to 12 months, you're 75 per cent effective; three to six months you're 50 per cent effective; and zero to three months 25 per cent effective, because we give so much training when people start that you probably only spend a couple of weeks in-role in the first three months.



People need access to a broad range of facilities to be wholly fit, says Lawler

"When we did that maths, just on service profile, the number of effective employees came down to 370 full-time equivalent. We then did an anonymous employee engagement survey and discovered our Employee Net Promoter Score was -12, so we knocked another 12 per cent off our total. We knocked a further 10 per cent off to allow for the lack of alignment and purpose within the business.

"In terms of the number of effective employees, this theoretically left me with around 290 – less than 60 per cent of my workforce. That's like flying a plane without an engine.

"My number one strategic objective for the business, and it remains number one still, was therefore clear: to increase employee connection to the business so we could keep people for longer, build the service profile back up and start to restore the engine."

LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS

Lawler continues: "A business in turnaround – and I've learned this the hard way – needs more leadership, more ownership, at all levels. We've therefore put significant investment behind developing a new leadership culture: one that's based on my personal leadership philosophy of authenticity, courage and ownership.

"These are all inter-related. Authenticity takes courage – bringing your whole self to work every day and being willing to consult, to publicly recognise that you don't have all the answers. That allows people to trust you. It allows them to challenge and question, but then to buy in to and understand decisions that are made. That in turn generates ownership. This is what I bring to the table – that's my twist on leadership."

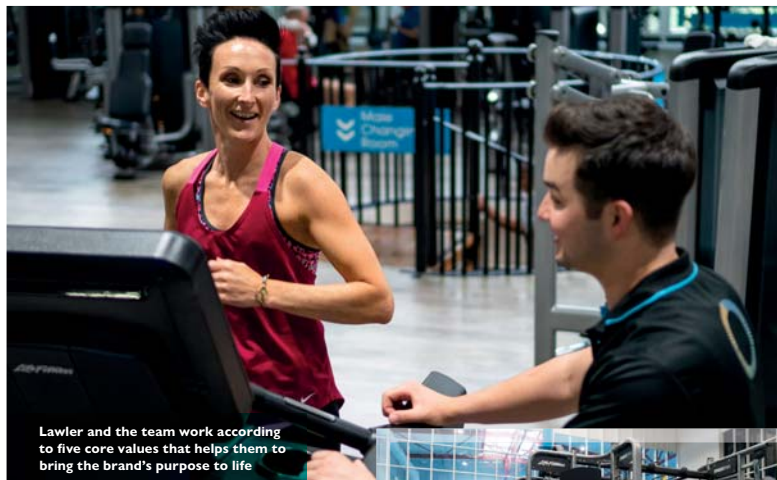


Lawler is leading from the front in spreading this new culture through the company. Not only is Total Fitness going through the process of putting all levels of the business through a three-day Personal Leadership Programme, in collaboration with training organisation The Living Leader, but Lawler has qualified as a master trainer to deliver the sessions herself. "I believe this does a lot to build trust and authenticity in the business," she says.

She enthuses: "The programme is exceptionally compelling. It's based on a belief that developing the leader means developing the person – that the skills of leadership apply in every situation, both at home and at work. It's about taking responsible choices, owning your own behaviour and understanding what personal leadership is. It's brilliant. I've taken 70 people through it so far and it's going to be dynamite."

PURPOSE THROUGH VALUES

This new leadership culture is also being reinforced by a new set of values, in a pincer movement designed to connect employees to the purpose of the business. ►



Lawler and the team work according to five core values that helps them to bring the brand's purpose to life

► "Total Fitness has a great purpose," explains Lawler. "We believe everybody is better when they're fitter. We also believe fitness is not one-dimensional: if you only grant access to a limited product – to a gym, for example – you aren't providing access to whole fitness. People need access to a broad range of facilities to be wholly fit, and everybody – including the more challenged markets of the north of England where we operate – deserves that. Because everybody needs it. "So, it's a great purpose, but the question was: how to bring it to life? Sure, we could point to all our facilities, but that isn't very compelling. The only credible way to bring it to life is through behavioural values and people. As a member, you have to feel our purpose, not just see it or be told about it."

She continues: "But those behavioural values had to be created. To do this, we married employee feedback on what Total Fitness meant to them with the qualities we knew we needed in the business to turn it around. The outcome is five very compelling values we felt our employees would understand, and could behave in accordance with. These are our 'how', and they explain they ways in which we bring our purpose to life."

"The first value is 'Inspire Others into Action', which is about leadership: always being the best version of yourself and, by creating a place where everyone thrives, encouraging others to do the same. The second is 'Make it Happen' – balancing head and heart, but always aiming to do the right thing for the business, team and members, taking the initiative and accepting and learning from mistakes. It's about empowerment. 'Proud and Strong Together' is about trust, knowing what we stand for, valuing each other and the strength of the team. 'Find a Way to Win' is about resilience, rising to any challenge, looking ahead with success and continual improvement in mind. And finally, 'Act with Gratitude' is about being thankful, celebrating every win, appreciating each others' commitment and focusing on fun, passion and positivity."



Lawler credits the brand's turnaround to a focus on people

And the combined impact of the new leadership philosophy and valued behaviours? "It has been so powerful across the leadership team. In January, off the back of all this work, we came out of the blocks so hard that by the end of February, we'd already delivered our half-year membership growth target and achieved 107 per cent growth year-on-year – which was more than double the previous year."

Equally important, Employee Net Promoter Score (ENPS) is up from -12 to +22 – a swing of 34 per cent – and the proportion of employees in the business for less than 12 months has fallen from 58 per cent a year ago to 45 per cent now. "I'm exceptionally proud of that one," says Lawler, adding: "This focus on people has unquestionably been the driver of the turnaround we've seen so far. We've run a limited capital investment programme, but that can't be attributed with the credit."

FIGHTING THE FIGHT

Lawler does, however, recognise that work must now be done on the fitness product itself. "It's a case of priorities when you're moving a business, when you're trying to bring a purpose to life. You first have to do it through your people, then through your product."

"The limited round of CapEx at the back end of last year really only brought our fitness offering on a par with other



The fitness product in Total Fitness stills needs some serious investment, says Lawlor, but first it's important to define the fitness philosophy that underpins the brand's purpose



operators. Although the clubs had previously received investment, the fitness product had been seriously under-invested in, and these are large clubs – we could have spent a lot more. Wilmslow, for example, is the second biggest health club in Europe at 110,000sq ft. You can imagine the capital that sucks up. Our other clubs are somewhere between 60,000 and 90,000sq ft, so they also require an awful lot of CapEx. Importantly, though, I've learned you don't need to invest as much if you sort out the people first.

"That said, we'll work on the fitness product and we have a long way to go with it. We'll need to raise capital for that, but first of all we have to define the fitness philosophy that underpins our purpose. Only then can we work out what our fitness product should look like and what our investment should be. We should have those answers by mid-August.

"What that will also do is help us understand how we build new clubs in the future. Because we're going to build another club, but we're going to build it very differently from what's gone before, not just at Total Fitness but in the market as a whole.

"I can't give you timings on that, because we have some key questions to answer first. How are we going to build it? What are we going to put in it? Where should we build it? We don't just want to plonk a flag in the ground.

"What I can tell you is that it will be big and it will be mid-market. The mid market is a challenging place, but it comes back to our purpose. Low-cost membership and limited service provision generate accessibility to participation and membership, but they don't generate accessibility to full fitness, which is what we all need. We need a running track, we need wet side facilities, we need a variety of group exercise classes. People need that, and somebody has to do it. Somebody has to stand proudly and do it in the very hard yard of the middle market, in the market where other people don't want to operate. That's our fight and we're bringing it.

"The local authorities do it, but we do it commercially, which is tougher. But that's our task. It's the biggest social purpose in this sector – I'm in the trenches fighting the most purposeful fight in the market – and I couldn't be more excited about that, or prouder to be doing it." ●

Members of low-cost clubs make up 25 per cent of all gym members in the UK

EUROPEAN GROWTH

The UK health and fitness industry has doubled in size since 2000. Will growth continue, or even gather pace? And what does this mean for the European health and fitness market? How big could it grow and what factors will have an impact? HCM asks those who have the most up to date research

DAVID TRUNKFIELD

PwC: head of hospitality and leisure

Research by PwC, called, *UK Low Cost Gyms*, shows that the low cost clubs have emerged as a clear category winner in the continued growth of the UK health and fitness market, which is currently worth around £5bn and has been growing in the region of 4 per cent a year over the last five years, doubling in size since 2000.

Low cost clubs have been the most significant driver of market growth and are likely to drive growth going forwards. In revenue terms, they've increased market share from 3 per cent in 2012, to 12 per cent currently. Members of low cost clubs also account for 25 per cent of gym members and 4 per cent of the UK population.



We are now starting to see operators broaden the locations in which they operate, and increasingly targeting areas with a smaller population catchment

A number of factors continue to support the growth of low cost gyms. Health and fitness membership penetration has been increasing in both the UK and European territories, supported by the ability of the low cost operators to bring new members into the market and continued interest in health and fitness.

The number of low cost gyms in the UK has increased tenfold from 60 in March 2011 to 654 in December 2018. We're now starting to see operators broaden the locations in which they operate, and increasingly targeting areas

with a smaller population catchment by developing new business models.

As they continue to gain market share, we believe there will be further scope for more low cost penetration in the UK. We estimate there's a total opportunity for 1,200 to 1,400 low cost gyms in the UK, which is 550 to 750 more than there are at present.

Our assessment is based on the current landscape, but as the concept evolves across location type and new gym and health club models are created, the overall opportunity is likely to increase.

Large, low-cost chains like
McFIT continue to grow



KARSTEN HOLLASCH

Deloitte: partner

According to the European Health & Fitness Market Report 2019, published by EuropeActive and Deloitte, the European fitness market generated revenues of €27.2bn in 2018, with a total membership of 62.2m across nearly 62,000 fitness clubs at year-end.

From 2016 to 2018, membership in the European fitness market increased by an average of 3.8 per cent annually. If this trend continued, there would be more than 80 million members by 2025; and this figure could be as high as 86 million if the penetration rate increased from the current 7.8 per cent to 11 per cent, for example.

In terms of the number of clubs, the future development will likely be impacted by two opposing trends: the



I don't think Brexit will have a negative impact on the fitness market growth in Europe, as this is very much UK related

expected growth of small, specialised boutique studios, as well as the continued growth of large low-cost chains like McFIT, Basic-Fit, PureGym, The Gym Group, clever fit or FitX. Many countries still have a lot of potential, for example France, where Basic-Fit alone opened 92 clubs in 2018 – two every week, on average. Although boutiques will also have an impact, this will take longer, as the concept of boutique clubs needs to gain traction in the less mature markets.

If we assume these trends will even each other out, and average membership remains rather stable at around 1,000

members per club, this would imply around 80,000 clubs in 2025 based on an estimated membership of 80 million. However, assuming that the impact from large-scale operators is higher, this figure could also be closer to 70,000-75,000.

I don't think Brexit will have a negative impact on the fitness market growth in Europe, as this is very much UK-related. What I think would make a considerable difference is more support from public institutions for health and fitness. This could also be driven by a further strengthening of the fitness industry associations. ▶



It's unclear at this point whether home-based offerings like Peloton will have a positive or negative impact on gym membership

HERMAN RUTGERS

Global Growth Partners: CEO

EuropeActive has a mantra of: '80 million members by 2025', which was launched in 2015 projecting out one decade, and based on the assumption of an average growth in the number of members in the greater European region (EU plus Norway, Switzerland, Russia and Turkey) per year of around 5 per cent. Based on the actual data for 2018, we are on track to at least achieve that goal, possibly with a few million more.

If we achieve 80 million members and assume the same average of 1,000 members per club as in 2018, that would mean 80,000 facilities, versus last year's 62,000, equating to 18,000 more sites. However, it is questionable to assume that the number of members per club will remain stable. In the USA, the average number of members per



club is 1,487, almost 50 per cent more than in Europe. With the rise of the chains and the low cost clubs, it is more likely the average number of members per club will rise and at the same time we will see an increase in the number of smaller sized boutiques and studios.

The 2018 data reveals big differences in membership numbers. FitX in Germany has the highest average number of members at 8,784. Pure Gym, the biggest low cost chain in the UK, has an average of 4,559 members per club and McFit, in Germany, achieves 6,771 per club. It is logical that the lower the price the higher the number of members per club

With the rise of the chains and the low cost clubs, it is more likely the average number of members per club will rise and at the same time we will see an increase in the number smaller sized boutiques and studios

and that we see much lower average membership numbers per site for the boutiques and studios.

The impact of the home market will also be of influence. Peloton has just launched in the UK and will enter Germany later this year, but if anything I believe these developments will be positive for the health and fitness industry, as they will promote exercise to new target groups. Research has shown that people who exercise at home are more loyal health club members.

In conclusion, my guesstimate is that we will have anywhere between 70,000 and 80,000 facilities in Europe by 2025.



Millennials regard fitness as an essential part of life

NIGEL BLAND

Deloitte LLP: partner

Assuming the current rate of market growth is maintained, at around 4 per cent per annum in 2017/2018, the number of clubs in Europe will increase by around a third by 2025 to over 80,000.

The factors that could support such a significant growth include the increasing significance of the millennials – who regard fitness as a must have – the wider range of products available, driven partly by the proliferation of boutiques, and the opportunity to provide specific offers for underserved markets. For example, our European survey shows that Germany, Switzerland and France achieved faster than average growth in 2018, largely driven by rapid expansion of the budget gyms into areas that were less well supplied. Overall penetration of 15+ year olds across Europe is still just below 10



Consolidation is beginning to increase across Europe, which suggests that in certain markets, operators would prefer to remove a competitor than create more sites in competition with each other

per cent, so increasing that to around 13 per cent (still less than the UK, the Netherlands and much of Scandinavia) would provide more than enough demand for the additional 20,000 clubs.

However, there are some indications that overall growth rates may begin to slow in the next few years. First, in 2018 the growth in clubs exceeded the growth in sector revenue at 3.4 per cent. Second, there is an emerging trend for non-site based fitness, with companies like Peloton combining group training with the convenience of home, or indeed a hotel room. Third, the level of consolidation is beginning to increase across Europe,

which suggests that in certain markets, operators would prefer to remove a competitor than create more sites in competition with each other.

On balance, I believe the overall growth rates will slow over the next few years, but we are still likely to see another 10,000 to 15,000 clubs open over that period, assuming steady economic growth. Given that the sector will continue to grow, driven by the macro factors underpinning demand and this following wind, the well-funded, well operated companies will continue to achieve growth rates significantly above GDP. ●

EMS is a powerful
USP for studios,
PTs and gyms



EMS – THE PERFECT MICRO-STUDIO SERVICE

EMS training is having a major impact on the studio and gym market and being used by athletes, celebrities and also for rehabilitation. We talk to a select group of studio owners to hear how they're maximising the versatility of this type of training

The UK boutique fitness market is rapidly expanding - in London alone, there are currently 278 studios, offering over 15,000 classes each week.

This means finding a unique selling point has to be a top priority for any prospective studio owner. Electro Muscle Stimulation (EMS) training is helping many to do just that.

The potential for integrating an EMS service is vast. Facilities can choose to provide a bespoke EMS offering, market it as an additional package or marry it with other services.

TIME TO GET ON BOARD

With the London Boutique Studio Report showing the EMS market grew in value by 281 per cent in the last five years, the potential for prospective studio owners is huge.

The secret to success lies in offering a service that is unique, innovative and effective. EMS is extremely versatile, bringing clear results, all in a time-efficient, accessible and innovative manner. There's never been a better time to get on board.

The London Boutique Studio Report showed the EMS market grew in value by 281 per cent in the last five years, meaning the potential for prospective studio owners is huge

EMS sessions are short, but produce visible results – from weight loss to strength improvements and muscle toning

For more information and to book a free EMS trial session, visit: www.be-a-first-mover.com

■ CASE STUDY

E-PULSIVE - BESPOKE EMS BOUTIQUE STUDIO

"We currently run a studio in New York City called EPulse Fitness and one in Dallas called Ninety20 and with the success we're seeing here in the UK, the potential for growth is great"

Mario Kaspers, CEO

E-Pulsive is a personal training boutique studio, running EMS sessions in South Kensington.

When initially set up, the E-Pulsive service concentrated on mobile at-home training, growing organically until it was viable to set up in a studio space. The brand is now a favoured partner for the rich and famous, training everyone from Victoria's Secret models to well-known actors and maximising this exposure through social media.

Mario Kaspers, CEO, E-Pulsive Ltd, explains, "People lead busy lives. They don't have the time to spend three hours in the gym, but long for the physical benefits of having done so.

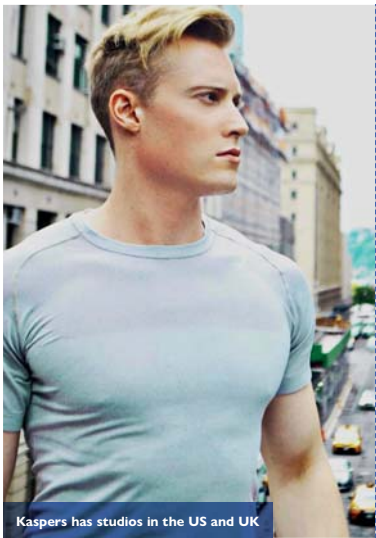
"Our clients want a quick

solution. That is what makes EMS training so appealing. They can get in and out in 20 minutes but are guaranteed visible results – from weight-loss to strength improvements and muscle toning.

"When you see the incredible progress EMS brings, you can't help but talk about it – our business has gone from strength to strength through word of mouth.

"We currently run studios in New York City and Dallas, and with the success we're seeing here in the UK, the potential for growth is great.

"Our current focus is to set up a franchise model for the business and to expand our network of top trainers and clients."



Kaspers has studios in the US and UK

■ CASE STUDY

TRIBAL - SPORT, HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE STUDIO

► **Tribal is a training facility** based in Chertsey. Specialists in endurance sports coaching and health transformations, the team's client base consists mostly of professionals and business owners training for health transformation and endurance sports such as cycling, swimming, running and triathlon.

Since introducing EMS to their original coaching service over six months ago, the business has dramatically increased profitability. The team has attracted new clients with EMS, and, approximately 50 per cent of existing clients have added EMS to their training week. They are now looking to expand further.

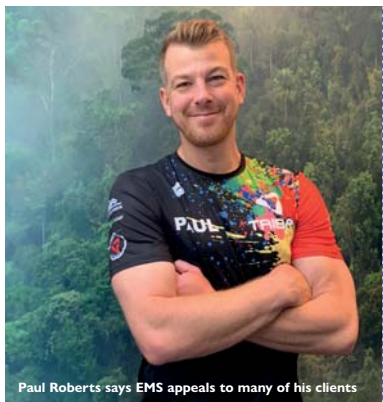
Paul Roberts, head coach and owner of Tribal discusses the successes with EMS, saying: "EMS is the perfect complement to our studio. The broad-spectrum benefits of EMS appeal to a large cross-section of our clients. One of our main client groups, the endurance athletes, rarely values

the importance of investing time in strength training – preferring to focus on logging miles over any athletic development.

"Injury rates are high in endurance sports because of the repetitive nature of the activity and the athletes rarely decide to move well, before they move often. With EMS, athletes can easily make the time for a weekly strength session that focuses on movement quality and gives a complete muscle contraction, inclusive of their fast-twitch muscle fibres.

"Many of our guys are simply never exposed to the use of these dormant fibres and their functionality is increased significantly in a short period of time. Our clients are seeing the results of this first-hand, with personal best performances and improved recovery and mobility.

"With so much interest in such a short time frame, we're confident we'll double our EMS delivery over the coming months."



Paul Roberts says EMS appeals to many of his clients

"With EMS, athletes can easily make the time for a weekly strength session that focuses on movement quality and gives a complete muscle contraction, inclusive of their fast-twitch muscle fibres"

Paul Roberts, head coach and owner

Tina Copp has seen EMS drastically aid rehabilitation



"We've grown a large proportion of our client base through referrals from our chiropractic business. After just one session, they feel the physical benefits of EMS to the point where they no longer need regular chiropractic treatment."

Tina Copp, business owner

■ CASE STUDY

ARC ACTIVE - EMS PERSONAL TRAINING STUDIO

Arc Active, in Bridgwater, offers EMS training for weight loss, body transformation, muscle building and injury rehab.

Working closely with their parallel chiropractic business, Arc Active has built a huge client base through rehab referrals and clear success stories. They are now looking to develop specific 10-minute injury rehab EMS programmes that focus on treating the injured area and give clients an introduction to the training method in order to build confidence.

Tina Copp, business owner, Arc Active says: "EMS technology is helping to bridge the gap between effective rehabilitation and injury prevention, and training for muscle toning, weight-loss and strength.

"We've grown a large proportion of our client base through referrals from our chiropractic business. It works. Even after just one session, they feel the physical benefits of EMS to the point where they no longer need regular chiropractic treatment.

"For example, one of our clients had injured her knee and walking was painful. All other gym workouts were putting too much strain on the joints and subsequently she gained lots of weight from being immobile.

"Since using EMS, her knee has fully recovered, she's off her pain medications and has lost 17 inches off her body. We've shown so many people the power of EMS. Ninety per cent of clients sign up to a full course after just the first session. It's an amazing retention tool."

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PLANET FITNESS

The global health and fitness markets reached an all-time high in terms of memberships in 2018.

IHRSA's Melissa Rodriguez highlights the topline numbers for HCM

In 2018, health club membership had its best year ever, topping 183m users around the globe. Industry revenue totalled an estimated US\$94 billion, and the club count exceeded 210,000 facilities. Leading markets also continued to show growth in the Americas and Europe.

THE AMERICAS

In total, the industry across North America, including the US and Canada, attracted 68.6m members at more than 46,000 club sites in 2018. Revenue, membership numbers and the total number of clubs all increased in the US from 2017 to 2018. Revenue grew from US\$30 billion in 2017 to US\$32.3 billion in 2018, while membership numbers increased from 60.9m to 62.5m.

The US club count rose from 38,477 to 39,570 facilities. The membership penetration rate in the US was 20.8 per cent in 2018, while Canada's was lower at 16.7 per cent. Roughly 6.1m Canadians belonged to one of approximately 6,500 fitness facilities in the country.

The Latin American health club market is robust, with potential for growth. Based on data gathered in *The IHRSA Latin American Report (Second Edition)*, Brazil's 34,000 health clubs rank the country second only to the US among global fitness markets in terms of numbers. More than nine million Brazilians belong to a health club.

With more than 12,000 facilities, Mexico ranks second in Latin America and third worldwide in terms of number of clubs. Opportunities for growth are abundant in Latin America, as member penetration rates remain low across 18 countries.



Melissa Rodriguez is senior research manager at IHRSA.

Visit www.ihrsa.org/publications to access resources mentioned in this article





Germany attracts more than 11m members at 9,343 locations and generates US\$6.3bn in annual revenue

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

Based on findings gathered by The FACTS Academy, approximately 3.8m members utilise 5,800 health clubs in 10 markets in the Middle East and North Africa. These 10 markets collectively generate roughly US\$2.3 billion in industry revenue. Saudi Arabia leads all markets in this region in revenue, with approximately US\$940m generated at 1,250 health clubs, which attract more than 1.2m members.

In terms of club count, Egypt leads all Middle East and North Africa (MENA) markets with 1,680 facilities.

Despite conflicts in several MENA countries which is disrupting day to day life, there's a demand for fitness, as consumers seek to exercise and reap the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Successful international fitness operators, including Fitness First, Gold's Gym, and World's Gym, have expanded into the Middle East. Fitness Time, based in Saudi Arabia, has more than 160 facilities in the Middle East, highlighting the opportunity in this region.

The outlook of the health club industry is bright and promising. As leading economies continue to improve, the industry is expected to thrive in the global marketplace, serving consumers with a variety of health and fitness needs. Offering access to fitness amenities, instructors, trainers and coaches, club operators are well-positioned to lead a healthier world.

EUROPE

Roughly 64.3m Europeans belonged to a health club or studio in 2018, as the industry generated an estimated US\$32.1 billion in revenue at 63,955 facilities.

The UK and Germany continue to lead all European markets.

In the UK, according to research by the Leisure Database Company, 9.9m members belong to one of the nation's 7,038 health clubs and studios. Germany attracts more than 11m members at 9,343 locations and generates US\$6.3 billion in annual revenue.

According to *The European Health & Fitness Market Report*, Europe has strong prospects for growth considering not only the mature, solid markets in Western Europe, but also the potential in Eastern European markets: while the overall penetration rate in Europe was 7.8 per cent in 2018, Turkey and the Ukraine had the lowest penetration rates at 2.6 per cent and 2.9 per cent, respectively.

Successful international fitness operators, including Fitness First, Gold's Gym, and World's Gym, have expanded into the Middle East

2018 KEY STATISTICS

Global health club membership topped **183m users**

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Approximately
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& North Africa

CHINA

The combined annual revenue from the top 10 cities in China is **US\$3.9bn**

Only **2.98%** of people in Greater China belong to a health club

Domestic awareness of fitness has been significantly improved, especially in the past five years, and the fitness culture has become a symbol of a modern lifestyle in China

The health club market in China is among the largest in the world. On Mainland China, the combined revenue from the top 10 cities ranks fourth among all global markets at US\$3.9 billion in annual revenue, while the number of club members ranks ninth in the world at 4.5m.

Opportunities for growth and development remain for the industry in China, as the market has one of the lowest penetration rates among developed countries. Only 2.98 per cent of people in Greater China belong to a health club.

Although the concept of modern fitness clubs first appeared in China over three decades ago, large-scaled marketisation only began after the year 2000.

Prior to that, average Chinese consumers had neither strong awareness nor sufficient disposable income to take out a fitness club membership and fitness clubs were mostly designed as small gyms which were used by athletes.

After over 15 years of evolution, the fitness club market in China has become diversified, with large chains, small studios, and new business models such as O2O – or Online to Offline – co-existing dynamically to address consumers' various needs.

China's rapid development in the past three decades has brought tremendous improvement to living standards, but also undesirable health issues such as chronic fatigue and sleep disorder. Meanwhile, the national government has been actively increasing public awareness of sports participation and personal fitness by promulgating the Outline of Nationwide Physical Fitness Program in 2016.

As a result, domestic awareness of fitness has been significantly improved, especially in the past five years, and the fitness culture has become a symbol of a modern lifestyle in China. Currently, the penetration rate of fitness clubs in China is estimated to be 2.98 per cent in the top 10 cities.

INDIA

Home to one of the global economic powers, the health club market in India is among the largest in the Asia-Pacific region. India ranks fifth in market size among Asia-Pacific health club markets, at US\$821m in annual revenue. The number of health club locations ranks third in the region at 3,813 sites, while the country's two

million members ranks fifth among observed markets.

The fitness club market in India is highly fragmented. Chained top-10 organised players comprise only 15-20 per cent of the overall market in terms of number of clubs. Independent players that are mostly low-end 'mom-and-pop' shops make up the rest of the market. Even with considerable growth over the past decade, the fitness club market in India is still relatively immature compared to other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Opportunities remain for the health club industry in India, as the country has the lowest member penetration rate in the Asia-Pacific region. Only 0.15 per cent of the Indian population between the ages of 15 and 64 currently belongs to a health club.

In efforts to grow the industry in India, the United Health & Fitness Forum (UHFF) was formed in 2016. Led by the top club operators in India, UHFF and its members organise events such as training workshops, boot camps, walkathons, and group exercise classes, along with other health and fitness initiatives.



The fitness market
in India generates
US\$821m in
annual revenue

There are
3,813
health clubs and
gyms in India

Only **0.15** per cent of the
Indian population between the
ages of **15** and **64** belongs
to a health club

All data sources for international markets increase each year, so does the collective understanding for each market represented in the IARC's Global Report. Due to the lack of primary research available for international markets, industry analysis is recommended for a multi-year time-span.

Introducing the Spinner® **CHRONO**

The Spinner® Chrono by Precor distances itself from the pack of indoor cycles that measure power by offering a hassle-free experience for operators, instructors and riders alike, all while staying true to the iconic feel of a Spinner® bike.

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The Spinner® Chrono bike will exceed expectations...



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PRECOR | **SPINNING**



Spinning® classes can create a sense of community that keeps customers coming back

Putting a spin on engagement

Precor's bikes are bringing success to a wide range of different health and fitness operations, from boutiques to trusts. We look at the latest examples

Spinning® is a carefully crafted experience, creating a strong following and sense of community. This extends far beyond the ride, helping operators bring enthusiasts and regular exercisers together.

Instructor workshops, charity fundraising, distance challenges and classes aimed at specific groups all combine to keep members coming back for more.

ENGAGING BOUTIQUE

Cat Booker, industry expert and owner of Cat Booker Fitness, comments: "It's all about making sure the exerciser is engaged and feels part of the community."



"Once people try a Spinning® class they're hooked. Then it's all about creating mini communities within the business"

Cat Booker

Booker's multi-purpose studio has a 50:50 floor split between Spinning® – featuring 15 Precor Spinner® bikes – and small group functional training.

"Personalisation is important, I want every member to be able to test their power level threshold using SPINPower®, so we can give them an individual fitness programme, no matter what classes they take," she says.

"Once people try a Spinning® class they're hooked. Then it's all about creating mini communities within the business. Sometimes these happen naturally, with enthusiasts becoming friends and meeting up outside of the studio. Twice a year we hold a social to bring everyone together, as well as holding workshops on topics such as nutrition and detoxing etc.

"Social media plays a big part in helping members feel part of the wider Spinning® community. They love it when our instructors go to events and can update them with the latest information."

SALT AYRE SUCCESSES

Stuart Glover, sports development and facilities manager at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, agrees community involvement is key to member retention. The leisure centre uses Precor Spinner® bikes to support charity fundraising initiatives, actively placing them in public areas where footfall is high,

encouraging gym goers and council staff to engage in distance challenges.

Challenges involve 'travelling' a specific distance, eg, Lands End to John O' Groats. An average of 30-50 participants compete, tracking miles and monitoring progress, on the Precor Spinner® bikes.

GROWTH AT DARWEN

Darwen Leisure Centre, a long-time supporter of Spinning®, has invested in 21 Spinner Chrono Power bikes, along with two Spinner® Ride bikes specifically for the gym floor, to give exercisers a choice if they want a simple jump on and ride session.

Richard Brown, leisure, health and wellbeing manager at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council says: "Indoor cycling remains a mainstay group fitness exercise option for customers throughout the Borough, so ensuring that the experience is consistently positive is important.

Having the latest technology, mixed with great instructor delivery always has our customers coming back for more. It was easy to choose the Precor Spinner® Chrono, as it represents a big step forward in terms of design, feel and quality."

Find out more: email: info@precor.com or call 01276 404900

A TRUE PARTNERSHIP

Partnering with established local chain, Talwalkars, David Lloyd Leisure is set to take its luxury, family-oriented clubs to India, with the first location opening in Pune this summer.

Steph Eaves spoke to Bruce Gardner and Prashant Talwalkar to find out more

BRUCE GARDNER

New clubs director, David Lloyd Leisure

How long has an India offering been in the works?

We've been planning our entry into the Indian market for around six years. We decided to go ahead with it now, because the partnership with Talwalkars was a great fit. We spent a lot of time researching the market to ensure the business would work and found the best way to approach it was with an excellent partnership.

How was Talwalkars the right fit?

Talwalkars was looking to expand its portfolio from solely having inner-city gyms to having a broader health club offering. The partnership works well, as both companies have roots in the family market and the business approach is similar. The opportunity was also perfect as it came about at a time when we were seeking international expansion.

What considerations did you have to take into account about the Indian market?

There's been a lot to consider when embarking on the newest venture for the company. Our unique offering at David Lloyd Leisure is one where friends and families spend quality time together, whether having a family swim, enjoying a meal or a social event such as a quiz night. This fits very well with the Indian leisure market, which is geared up for large social gatherings such as banqueting and conferences.

Some fitness activities are less established in India, so we've taken this into account when looking at what will be part of the product mix. The breadth of our offering will be unique and we feel that our wide range of racquet sports will be of particular interest – we'll be offering badminton, squash and tennis, which fit in with the social and fitness needs of the audience.

The physical design of the facilities will be quite different from clubs in Europe, as there's less land available, so we're building a taller club across more floors to compensate.

How has the collaboration unfolded?

The journey together in partnership has been smooth; the Talwalkars have been very trusting of our product knowledge and experience and they've provided local knowledge and expertise for us on how to run a business in India.



Bruce Gardner hopes this new venture in India will pave the way for further international expansion



The DLT club will bring together fitness, sport and leisure.



We've partnered with well-known brands and suppliers and have tested various membership options, as this is something that's different from the UK market – the norm in India is for members to opt for a longer-term membership commitment, rather than a yearly contract.

Tell us about the first club

We're planning to open the club in the late summer – the building is now near completion.

Pune, which is around a three hour drive from Mumbai, is a growing city, with around nine million people, a large IT sector, universities and a large demographic that's similar to other large cities where we have successful clubs. Once this location is established we plan to expand – both within the city of Pune and then in other parts of India.

“

The breadth of our offering will be unique and we feel that our wide range of racquet sports will be of particular interest – we'll be offering badminton, squash and tennis, which fit in with the social and fitness needs of the audience

We're very excited about the club opening. By combining Talwalkars' knowledge of the Indian health and fitness market with David Lloyd Leisure's expertise in the design and creation of premium family-orientated clubs, the company aims to provide a new standard for clubs in India.

What will be special about it?

A stunning rooftop restaurant will feature at the top of the club – led by a top chef. The club will offer a mix similar to all of our racquets clubs – kids activities, a high-tech gym, group exercise, swimming pool, tennis and racquet sports.

How will it compare to other clubs in India?

The club will be unique within the fitness market – the first of its kind. While there are many gyms and some standalone



**Talwalkar
approached
DLL to suggest
a joint venture**



PRASHANT TALWALKAR

Managing director, Talwalkars Health Club Limited

Can you give us some background on Talwalkars Better Value Fitness clubs?

The great visionary, Vishnupant Talwalkar, founded Talwalkars in 1932 and the legacy has been taken forward by the following three generations.

Madhukar Vishnupant Talwalkar, Girish Madhukar Talwalkar and Prashant Sudhakar Talwalkar were instrumental in the formation of Talwalkars Better Value Fitness Limited in 2003.

Then, following significant progress and expansion, the company got listed on the stock exchange in 2010. It gives me immense pride to say that today there are over 250 branches of TBVF across India.

After a 2018 TBVF demerger, two companies were formed – namely Talwalkars Lifestyle Limited and Talwalkars Health Club Limited. I am presently the managing director of Talwalkars Health Club Limited.

It was around six years ago that I approached David Lloyd Leisure to associate with Talwalkars in India to create a unique venture – David Lloyd Clubs Talwalkars.

Why did you decide to approach DLL at that time?

After the expansion of Talwalkars in the field of health clubs, we decided to explore the opportunity with David Lloyd Clubs. Although years of expertise have enabled us to gain a fair insight in all aspects of running a health club, we thought it wise to associate with the best in the business to help us set up our leisure clubs.



- fitness studios, we will be proudly bringing everything together for the whole family under one roof.

The leisure club will offer international standard facilities to its members. Alongside the excellent facilities will be outstanding coaching programmes for children and expertise available in every sport and fitness discipline, to help members learn to play, develop their techniques and reach their goals.

What's your target audience in India?

The target audience is families who live within a 20 minute drive time of the club. Our current members love the relaxed, sociable feel of their clubs and we will have plenty for everyone to enjoy. Families can come to the club throughout the week, perhaps for a swim and then a tasty meal after school, or they can spend a whole day in the club on the weekend.

Tours of the club started in May and we cannot wait to open to show local residents what we have to offer.

What have been some of the challenges with starting this new venture in India?

The challenges we have faced have included recruiting the right team in a different culture, finding partners, including agencies and suppliers, to work with and ensuring the building complies to our standard and within health and safety regulations. It has been a learning curve with great reward.

What are your future plans when it comes to the global reach of DLL?

In addition to expansion within India, we hope this project will mark the start of further international expansion for DLL into a range of new international markets.



Women in India are embracing fitness and are joining health clubs in greater numbers, says Talwalkar

DLL not only has a prominent standing in the UK, but also a strong presence all across the European continent. The primary ethos of both Talwalkars and DLL is similar in that we both target the family market, hence there was a very organic synergy to the whole venture, which made our association very smooth and effective.

What have you learned from each other?

The collaboration has been very friendly, with equal inputs from both sides. While Talwalkars has oriented DLL in terms of Indian culture and business proceedings, DLL has brought its experience of creating high end leisure clubs. In fact, it wouldn't be far fetched to say that someone from the UK could walk into a DLT Club and find absolutely no difference to a DLL club in the UK or Europe.

What is the current state of fitness in India?

It is rather unfortunate that India has barely 2 per cent of the population who can be termed as fitness conscious. However, the good news is that the Indian populace is getting more aware of the need to be fit and healthy and are gradually coming in to gyms and health-related facilities.

Of course, a steady shift in their financial position has also enabled a large number of Indians to join health and leisure clubs. A big advantage for a country like India as compared to other countries is the fact that we are able to sell long duration memberships – between one and 25 years – whereas other countries usually sell only limited duration memberships.

Are there any major differences in what Indians want from a fitness offering?

It would be fair to say that in the last 12 to 15 years, fitness has become more of a necessity than a luxury, considering the steady incline of stress, sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy eating habits. Meanwhile, greater awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle

is driving Indians to gyms and clubs. This is clearly reflected in the fact that Talwalkars health clubs has increased its presence, with 250 branches in more than 29 states and 80 cities.

The response we got in Tier Three cities has been quite an eye opener when compared to the bigger metropolitan areas.

Even the female population has broken out of its conservative shackles and women are joining health clubs in greater numbers. Satellite TV has allowed Indians to broaden their views and India is almost on a par with other countries.

Why are you opening the first DLT club in Pune?

Metro cities in India can be prohibitively expensive. With Pune being the satellite city of Mumbai, it seemed like the perfect choice of location in which to open our leisure club. Talwalkars Health Clubs already has eight branches in Pune.

Many Mumbai residents own a second home in Pune or places in and around Pune city and could well be prospective members of the new club. Unlike a health club where one spends approximately an hour a day at the most, a leisure club is a place where a family can spend an entire day filled with sports activities, games and a whole lot of fun.

What are your future plans for DLT clubs?

Since health and fitness is still in its infancy in India, we're far from saturation point, which is becoming the case in some more economically advanced countries.

Given India's massive population size, I envision seven to 10 more DLT Clubs opening over the next 10 years across India.

It's never a good idea to sit on your laurels, however successful you might have been in the past. Aspiration and hard work can help you to achieve goals you previously thought were impossible if you're determined.

I anticipate that this eclectic mix of Indian culture and English discipline can prove to be an extremely enriching experience for Indians in the very near future. ●

STEEL WARRIORS

CO-OPERATING TO BEAT KNIFE CRIME

A year after the launch of its first outdoor gym made from melted down, confiscated knives, Steel Warriors has won the support of the Co-op, which has pledged to fund the roll-out of a further 20 calisthenics gyms, as Kath Hudson reports

6

ur partners have been very generous, but we can't expect them to continue to make a loss, so we're about to start a fundraising push. We're hoping to get as many gyms off the ground as possible. At the moment the first one is making an impact on a local level, but we want to make a real change."

This is what Steel Warriors founder Ben Wintour said one year ago in an interview with HCM, so it's incredibly cheering to see that his vision has become a reality and that one gym is about to become many.

Former PR executives, Wintour and Pia Fontes, teamed up to launch Steel Warriors in response to reading the frequent reports of stabbings in London. Everything about the business was outside their experience, but they successfully won the support of steel fabricators and gym builders – who even agreed to work on a pro bono basis – as well as the Metropolitan Police, who committed to hand over the two thousand knives they confiscate on the streets each month, to be melted down to create the gyms.

"We looked at the reasons why teenagers were carrying knives and found that one was for protection and the other was to flex their muscle," says Wintour. "So we looked at alternative ways to meet these needs. Calisthenics is becoming quite a thing in prisons and seemed a good place to start."

Now the Co-op has come on board, with a funding injection which will pay for up to 20 more free community gyms across the UK, in areas impacted by knife crime.



Pia Fontes and Ben Wintour have brought The Co-op in as sponsor to support the growth of the Steel Warriors gyms



Co-op is funding 20 free outdoor calisthenics gyms

■ SUPPORTING OUTDOOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Through its Local Community Fund, Co-op has donated £7.5m to projects that promote community physical activity across the UK, with those organisations promoting sporting and outdoor skills being a key focus.

To date, £4.8m has been shared between 1,900 projects run by groups such as scouts and cadets and a further £2.1m to 850 projects which promote community sport, such as football, rugby and disability sports.

Community spaces have also received significant support, with more than £600,000 being shared by more than 200 projects, including sports centres, recreation clubs, playing fields, playgrounds, and skate parks.

Since 2017, Co-op has also been a supporter of parkrun, which organises 630 weekly, free, timed runs across the UK and earlier this year launched a £1m fund in Wales to enable groups with a community and environmental focus to safeguard spaces and become more sustainable.



Co-op's MacKenzie hopes for real change

Two new gyms will be built this year, which will feature gym instructors providing training sessions for different abilities to share skills.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Co-op's head of community propositions and planning, Sarah MacKenzie, says the initiative will raise awareness of the physical and emotional impact of knife crime, violence and abuse in communities. "This partnership is about much more than providing just money, it's about co-operation to make a bigger difference," she says. ►



All of Steel Warriors' gyms are made from the thousands of knives police confiscate from London's streets

- "Across the country, Co-op has connections and colleagues in local communities which we will bring to bear to activate the gyms. Local training instructors and sports groups will be invited to use the gyms for free and Co-op will connect local youth groups working to access the facilities."

This is one of a number of initiatives organised or supported by Co-op to activate communities and tackle knife crime, including no longer selling single knives at its stores. "Safety and security is a key priority for Co-op. We know violence and crime is about much more than statistics and it's not about the cost to business, it's about the human cost, its impact on people's lives and the communities in which they live and work," says MacKenzie. "As a community-based organisation, we see the impact on social issues in our stores and we're committed to working together to do all we can to protect colleagues and make our communities safer."

Wintour is delighted about the partnership: "We're really glad to be working with the Co-op and our supporters to get more gyms built and to grow our vision into one that offers pro-active support to communities nationwide." Fontes adds that collaboration is the key to tackling this problem. "There's no one person or organisation that can solve this issue alone. We believe the key to doing that and to finding ways to reduce knife crime is co-operation."

The first Steel Warriors opened next to a youth centre in Tower Hamlets last year and has been embraced by the community, with everyone from children to older Bengali women in their hijabs feeling comfortable using it and the more accomplished filming their moves and vlogging.

Going forward, the new gyms will continue to be built by the original engineers, Heyne Tillet Steel, with a variety of designs to accommodate both beginners and experts, with some unique and exciting new bar set-ups. ●

■ ABOUT THE CO-OP

Steel Warrior's new sponsor is an ethical retailer with a groundbreaking approach dating back to its founding in 1844.

The Co-operative Group is a UK consumer co-operative with a diverse range of high street and trade retail businesses, including food retail and wholesale; electrical retail; financial services; insurance services; legal services and funeral care.

With 4,200 locations, it's the largest consumer co-operative in the UK and is owned by more than 4.5 million active members who are democratically involved in setting business strategy, deciding how social goals are achieved, and sharing profits.

In 2016, £19m was returned to members and their chosen local community causes.

The group has more than 70,000 employees across the UK and is an

ethical retailer, allowing women the same democratic rights within the society as men since its founding. It was the first major UK retailer to champion Fairtrade and pioneered easily interpretable nutritional information on its own-brand food, plus the raising of animal welfare standards, installing renewable energy generation and investing significantly in community projects.

A close-up of two hands clapping, with a cloud of white powder or dust rising from the palms. The powder is captured in mid-air, creating a soft, ethereal glow against a dark background.

$ROI \approx (V \alpha J)$

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A wide-angle shot of a modern gym interior. The floor is covered in a vibrant, multi-colored Taraflex sports flooring with yellow, blue, and pink sections. Various exercise machines, including treadmills and ellipticals, are arranged in rows. The ceiling has a grid of recessed lighting.

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The Langley's gym – Matt Roberts at The Langley – utilises the Pavigym's 'dot station'



Matt Roberts chooses PRAMA

Fitness expert, Matt Roberts, has chosen Pavigym's PRAMA system to create an immersive, personalised workout experience at his new gym at The Langley hotel in Berkshire

A former royal hunting lodge nestled in grounds landscaped by 'England's greatest gardener', Capability Brown, The Langley offers the luxury and exclusivity of London's finest boutique-grand hotel with its own unique character and setting.

However, the former country estate of the third Duke of Marlborough, with its Grade II listed 18th century outbuilding and picturesque surroundings not only offers hundreds of years of history and tradition, it's also home to the most technologically-advanced gym solutions.

As part of the Luxury Collection's commitment to being "the world's most renowned assemblage of international hotels and resorts", behind closed Georgian doors The Langley offers a state-of-the-art fitness suite designed by leading personal trainer and author, Matt Roberts.

was tasked with the installation of ist revolutionary interactive technology in order to create an immersive, personalised experience for both personal training and exclusive group classes.

Borrowed from their fully interactive PRAMA boutique fitness studio, the interactive dots on the floor and walls are designed to encourage users to train at their maximum potential, and help PTs adapt sessions to each exerciser.

Intended to be used in combination with other interactive stations, the "Dot station" works best as part of the PRAMA fitness studio, but is adaptable enough to be employed as a solution for a wide variety of needs.

Scientifically designed and tested, these interactive units are at the cutting edge of

both technology and sports science and offer the most modern gym experience for personal trainers and users alike.

Designed and developed in Spain, the PRAMA studio aims to include anyone and everyone, helping all users to work at the limit of their own abilities.

PRAMA SHOWS

Roberts recognised its potential when he flew out to see the solution in action first-hand during a visit to one of Pavigym's biannual PRAMA Shows. These events are run by the company to showcase its product to interested parties and allow potential partners to learn more, view the studio up close, and even try it out for themselves.

Matt Roberts at The Langley is one of a growing number of luxury UK gyms that have turned to Pavigym for more than just their premium flooring solutions. David Lloyd Leisure has installed six PRAMA studios in locations across the UK, and the interactive gym revolution shows no sign of slowing.



Matt Roberts uses PRAMA

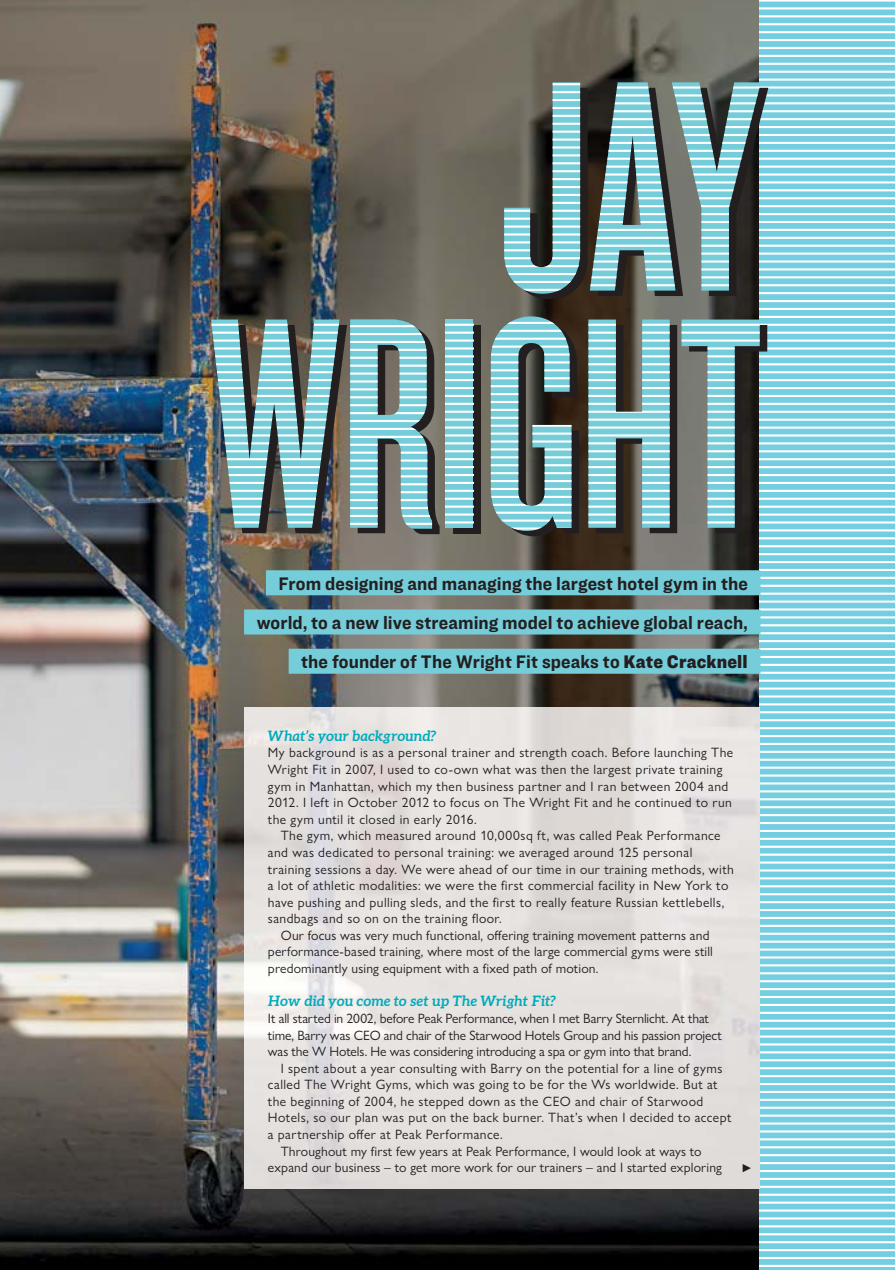
MATT ROBERTS

Matt Roberts at The Langley, is the first of its kind outside London, as well as being among the first in the UK to offer interactive floor and wall units.

Having supplied the flooring solution, fitness and flooring manufacturers Pavigym

Find out more: support.uk@pavigym.com or call +44 (0) 1223 969870

HUMAN BEINGS WERE DESIGNED TO RUN, JUMP,
LIFT AND CARRY THINGS. UNFORTUNATELY,
SOCIETY HAS EVOLVED IN A WAY THAT
PROMOTES A SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE, WHICH
IS CREATING MASSIVE PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL
AND MENTAL DYSFUNCTION ON A GLOBAL SCALE



JAY WRIGHT

From designing and managing the largest hotel gym in the world, to a new live streaming model to achieve global reach, the founder of The Wright Fit speaks to Kate Cracknell

What's your background?

My background is as a personal trainer and strength coach. Before launching The Wright Fit in 2007, I used to co-own what was then the largest private training gym in Manhattan, which my then business partner and I ran between 2004 and 2012. I left in October 2012 to focus on The Wright Fit and he continued to run the gym until it closed in early 2016.

The gym, which measured around 10,000sq ft, was called Peak Performance and was dedicated to personal training: we averaged around 125 personal training sessions a day. We were ahead of our time in our training methods, with a lot of athletic modalities: we were the first commercial facility in New York to have pushing and pulling sleds, and the first to really feature Russian kettlebells, sandbags and so on on the training floor.

Our focus was very much functional, offering training movement patterns and performance-based training, where most of the large commercial gyms were still predominantly using equipment with a fixed path of motion.

How did you come to set up The Wright Fit?

It all started in 2002, before Peak Performance, when I met Barry Sternlicht. At that time, Barry was CEO and chair of the Starwood Hotels Group and his passion project was the W Hotels. He was considering introducing a spa or gym into that brand.

I spent about a year consulting with Barry on the potential for a line of gyms called The Wright Gyms, which was going to be for the Ws worldwide. But at the beginning of 2004, he stepped down as the CEO and chair of Starwood Hotels, so our plan was put on the back burner. That's when I decided to accept a partnership offer at Peak Performance.

Throughout my first few years at Peak Performance, I would look at ways to expand our business – to get more work for our trainers – and I started exploring ►

- the residential market. It was a sector that was seeing more development in New York and I felt it had a lot of parallels with hotels.

Around 2006, a client of mine – an architect – asked if I could design a small home gym in New York for a gentleman by the name of Peter Monk, who was one of the wealthier guys in Canada. I did that and got to thinking that this might be a decent business, so I spoke to another client and friend – Dan Loeb, founder and CEO of New York-based hedge fund Third Point – about my idea of starting up a consulting company for residential development.

That resulted in two things: firstly, his support for the business, which I set up as The Wright Fit; and secondly, he asked if I would design the gym in the New York condominium where he had just bought a penthouse that was still in development – 15 Central Park West. He knew, from personal training with me, that I would do it right. I met with the development company, pitched against five other companies to design the health and fitness centre, and ended up winning.

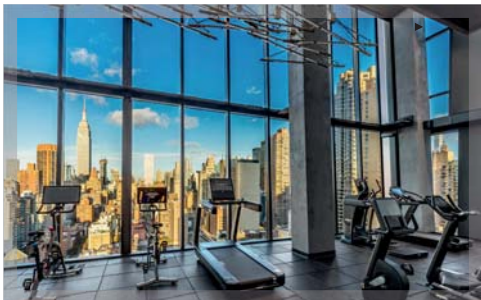
In 2007, this became our first design project and installation; we then took it on as a full management contract in 2008 and still manage it today. It's a 14,000sq ft facility, so it was really ambitious for the residential sector at that point, and even today it's still considered the most successful real estate project in New York City's history. We were really fortunate to pick up that project as our first endeavour as a business. It's an amazing building with amazing residents, and our facility really has stood the test of time.

What's the concept behind your gyms?


Human beings were designed to run, jump, lift and carry things. Unfortunately, society has evolved in a way that promotes a sedentary lifestyle, which is creating massive physical, emotional and mental dysfunction on a global scale.

When we design gyms, we're creating spaces for training movement patterns in all three planes of motion, allowing individuals to reconnect with their inherent nature and engage in a more dynamic lifestyle.

If you want to work with a PT and do some elite-level training, our facilities allow for that, but if you just want to go in and train on your own, you'll get a good return for your time and energy. With consumers' growing interest in fitness as a lifestyle, we're finding the people who walk into our facilities already have a pretty good fundamental understanding of how to use them. But our facilities also grow with you; as your



Wright says he creates spaces that allow people to reconnect with their inherent ways of moving



The Wright Fit aims to give people an extraordinary quality of life, by focusing on movement, nutrition, hydration and sleep

■ AN EXTRAORDINARY QUALITY OF LIFE

"At the heart of our wellbeing philosophy is a simple question: 'Would you like to have an extraordinary quality of life?'" explains The Wright Fit founder Jay Wright. "What constitutes an extraordinary quality of life is down to the individual to decide, but we then work with them to develop pathways to achieve it, putting them in control."

"There are four contributors to this sense of control. Firstly, people can to a large extent control the quality and quantity of their movement patterns. They have a lot of control over the quality and quantity of their nutrition too, and their hydration, and their sleep."

"So that's what we focus on: movement, nutrition, hydration, sleep. We educate people on how they can control these factors and it's a virtuous circle. When you start to create positive effects through physiology, it creates

more positive emotional energy too. When you have more positive emotional energy, it directly impacts your cognitive energy – you start to perform better at work and in your personal life. That then creates a higher sense of wellbeing, which brings you full circle. People used to call it a holistic approach. We call it a coherent approach. It's about creating a unified whole."

THE FOUR PILLARS

"In practical terms, our approach has four pillars. The first is education and learning. We teach people about behavioural change, one step at a time, until things become habit; we teach them how to move; we help them create rituals around sleep, hydration and so on."

"The second pillar is strength and conditioning, but we don't go straight into muscular development. We start with postural analysis, because if your

posture isn't right, you will never achieve your potential in terms of muscular or cardio-respiratory development."

"Our ultimate goal is to help people achieve functional longevity. Not just living longer, but retaining our strength and ability to move."

"The third pillar is nutrition. We believe in a plant-based diet with adequate amounts of protein. So not vegetarian – just plenty of micronutrients from plants, and then the right amount of protein depending on what training you're doing."

"And then the fourth pillar is recovery and regeneration. Most people have heard of over-training, but other than high-level athletes, we're almost never at risk of over-training. What we are all at risk of, on a day-to-day basis, is under-recovery. We lead stressful lives, and some of that is good stress, but we still need time to recover."



Each location is unique, and Wright works closely with the architects and interior designers of each building, while still putting his signature style into all of his gyms



- knowledge base grows, the facility will allow you to use what you're learning.

Our designs do of course help: we believe design is extremely important in motivating people. We take into account how design affects people's personal energy. We look at flow, at zoning, ensuring every detail has been thought of. We allow a lot of space for people to move. We cherry-pick all our equipment too, all of which is tried and true, and we incorporate training modalities that stand the test of time.

Each location is unique, working in collaboration with the architects and interior designers, but no matter how big it is – from 1,000sq ft to 60,000sq ft – you know you're in a Wright Fit facility. We don't try and reinvent the wheel each time. We know our wheel

works really well. That's why people hire us.

I would also say we're unique in that we specialise in design, programming and operations – and we do so at a commercial level but in the private context of being in a building where you have a captive audience. That requires a whole other level of management and hospitality, because you're in someone's building – in their home or their workspace.

What came after 15 Central Park West?

Everything slowed down in 2008 when the financial crisis hit, but it picked up again in late 2010, early 2011. That marked the beginning of the luxury residential boom we're seeing globally, but especially in New York and some of our larger markets in the US.



A LOT OF DEVELOPERS WERE COMING TO SEE 15 CENTRAL PARK WEST, TO UNDERSTAND WHAT MADE IT SO SUCCESSFUL, AND WE STARTED TO GET A LOT OF INTERESTING DESIGN PROJECTS OFF THE BACK OF THAT. SINCE 2008, WE'VE BEEN INVOLVED IN WELL OVER 140 PROJECTS GLOBALLY

The Wright Fit currently manages 18 facilities in the residential, corporate and hotel markets

A lot of developers were coming to see 15 Central Park West, to understand what made it so successful, and we got a lot of interesting design projects off the back of that. Since 2008, we've been involved in well over 140 projects globally.

The majority are in very high-end luxury residential developments, but we also work with hotels and corporates. We've worked and collaborated on facilities as far west as Honolulu; we've done several projects in San Francisco, LA, Chicago; we're active in Boston, Washington DC, all over the New York area, Miami. We've worked in Europe and we're working for the largest developer in India right now, DLF, on its most ambitious residential project to date – a very large-scale building just outside New Delhi that has approximately 75,000sq ft of amenities, including around 12,000sq ft of fitness and 12–15,000sq ft of spa. This wellness aspect is where we come in, through our design and consultation arm.

How many facilities do you manage?

We originally started out as a consulting firm with a primary expertise in design, and we

do still design a lot of facilities that are either managed by someone else, or else not managed by anyone. But we also started to convert a lot of our designs that were local – in the New York market – to management contracts. For these contracts, we recruit all the staff, do the budgeting and run the facility as if it were ours, but on behalf of the development.

Our trainers are the cream of the crop: we only work with those with a minimum 5,000 hours of practical experience, and they also have to meet high levels of educational criteria.

We currently have 18 facilities that we manage in the residential, corporate and hotel markets, with around five more pending installations this year. We're looking to close this year with around 24–25 facilities under our management.

Our other core competency lies in the provision of services within our facilities: personal training, aquatic/swimming lessons, group training, soft tissue therapy. The latter can be anything from traditional massage to medical massage, applied kinesiology to neuro-muscular therapy.



Top: The TWA Hotel at JFK Airport houses the largest hotel gym in the world, situated in Terminal 5. Below: The Wright Fit has been involved in over 140 projects globally

► All of these services can be offered even in the facilities we don't manage, and in fact this is an area of the business we're looking to expand. We're discussing a potential engagement with The We Company at the moment, for example, and we've had other people come to us – developers and operators – who are seeking to grow globally. In these scenarios, we essentially become a recruiting firm – recruiting staff on demand, training and developing them, giving them our programmes. Those staff could even be mobile, going wherever and whenever needed.

I certainly believe we have the potential to expand our platform for management and services not only nationally, but also globally, over the next couple of years.

One of your latest projects is the TWA Hotel at JFK in New York. Tell us more...

The TWA Hotel at JFK Airport is one of our more recent installations and designs, which we're managing and operating on behalf of

MCR – a large hotel operator in the US.

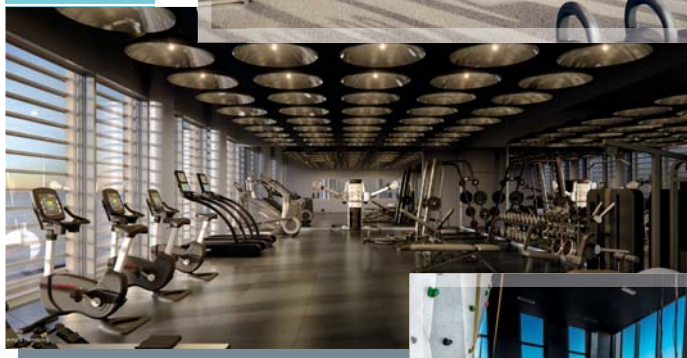
At around 12,000sq ft, it's being billed as the largest hotel gym in the world, and it's interesting because it's right there in Terminal 5 – the Jet Blue terminal.

We made a few concessions to it – it's a little heavier on the cardio than we typically do, for example – but we have all the functional and performance-based training equipment that we usually put in, and room for training movement patterns. We also have a Peloton studio with 13 bikes, so people can do a class whenever they like. It's a very progressive design.

It's only just opened, so we'll see how people interact with it. After all, it's not only a hotel gym – it's also in an airport, so we'll see how people on long layovers use it. Plus, it sells memberships, meaning it's also open to the 400,000 employees at JFK. It's a pretty cool concept and we're very excited to be part of it.

And tell us about The Performance Lab...

One of our big projects at the moment is The Performance Lab. In late 2017, I opened a commercial facility at our head offices in Chelsea, New York: a consumer-facing platform called The Performance Lab. It's a large-scale PT studio where we deliver on average 40 PT sessions a day. However, this summer we're also adding an additional 6,000sq ft of space, bringing it up to a total of 11,000sq ft – including 2,000sq ft of outdoor rooftop space, which is unrivalled in New York. We have multiple studios for high-end personal training and group exercise – everything from yoga to mat pilates, boxing to combat training to bootcamp-style classes.



Wright says the business is moving into the commercial industry, creating facilities that are accessible to the general public

The idea is to create a platform that we can take out to the public. We will eventually have live streaming here, so people in our facilities globally can see what we're doing at the Performance Lab – what our methodology and concepts are about. We'll run events and educational sessions too.

Consumers can even come to New York for a wellbeing break, go through in-depth physiological and psychological assessments, train with us for a while, then go back to their home facility taking our knowledge and programming with them. If they want continued support, we could offer that remotely. It's all about helping people achieve an extraordinary quality of life.

What are your plans for The Wright Fit?

We're currently designing another Performance Lab, in Long Island City. This one is in collaboration with Tishman Speyer, a large developer in the US: we're bringing the brand and acting as the managing partner; they're the capital partner.

We're also looking at the possibility of creating private labels – a hotel brand could have a fitness offering 'powered by The Wright Fit', for example. We might even allow for other Performance Labs, provided they meet

our criteria. We're very open to strategic partnerships where we provide the human and intellectual capital and they provide the real estate and financial capital.

And generally, through strategic partnerships, we're moving more and more into the commercial industry now – by which I mean making ourselves accessible to the general public, with concepts that integrate fitness, wellness and health across all platforms.

We'll be looking at large-scale sites, most likely located in corporate structures as it's a benefit for them too: it turns their cost centre into a profit centre. We want to take our four pillars (see 'An extraordinary quality of life', p73) and put them into a commercial product, with programming, workshops, seminars and so on that the public can access. Our consumer face is about to really start showing itself! ●

BODY IMAGE



Will the body image debate define the future of fit-tech?

Becca Douglas looks at the evidence

People are facing increasing pressure to achieve levels of perfection in the way they look, causing one in five UK adults to worry about their body image, according to new research from the Mental Health Foundation.

It's important the health and fitness sector is mindful of how new technology and initiatives are delivered, to ensure we operate responsibly in relation to this challenge.

RESULTS-LED APPROACH

Many people join a gym or health club to get results. To understand if these have been achieved, you need to start the process with some form of measurement and continue this throughout the journey.

What we still see in many health and fitness facilities is operators using well established methods to predict fat mass, such as callipers to measure skin folds. While popular, the accuracy of measures from such devices depends on the skill of the person doing the test.

Thanks to fit-tech and advancements in this area we no longer need to rely on manual methods. With just a touch of a button, fitness professionals can offer the end user (and their health and fitness professional) powerful visuals as well as a set of accurate measurements.

Chris Rock from Excelsior says: "For clients that are confident enough to be analysed, body scanning allows for a detailed assessment that provides an initial benchmark. These can be consistently repeated to provide ongoing biometrics, which can be a real motivator to the client, if the results are moving in the right direction!"

When it comes to mental health, Rock says: "Even a less than favourable result can be turned into a positive if the client is suitably directed or redirected to modify their behaviour or routine accordingly."



People join gyms because they want to change their bodies, surely, we should be in a position to help them achieve this

PHILLIP MIDDLETON, DERWENT

Rock continues: "Since body scanning allows for numerical values to be generated, and in some cases, a visual representation created, both the client's logical and emotional needs are more likely to be satisfied, giving better results."

"This combination of measuring body composition in numbers and pictures can be reassuring for clients, particularly if the number on the scale isn't changing because their body fat is lowering, while their muscle mass is increasing."

"If the assessment method is simply using the scales or taking photographs or using their reflection in the mirror, the client may not gain a true insight into the changes their body is making. Lack of understanding leads to lack of action."

Phillip Middleton, founder and MD of Derwent says: "Some unhealthy diet and exercise behaviours stem from people having a distorted body image. By using technology to accurately measure body composition we can inform and educate people about their internal body make-up and devise exercise routines to assist them in reaching more reasonable goals, linked to a more healthy lifestyle."

"People join gyms because they want to change their bodies. Surely, we should be in a position to help them achieve this through education and realistic target setting? We can only do this if we have ▶

**Our body-obsessed society
is causing 20 per cent of
adults to worry about
their body image**





Overall, I think we focus too much on the numbers. What the industry needs is something that is repeatable, that can show real change, and is visual

TRACY MORRELL, STYKU

- accurate information about their body composition to start with."

Tracy Morrell, sales director for Styku Europe says: "I find trainers arguing over fat mass percentages, with different methods producing varying results which can be poles apart – all while the member is caught in the middle confused and, at times, demoralised.

"Overall, we focus too much on the numbers. What the industry needs is something that is repeatable – that can show real change – and is visual.

"Styku's 3D body scanner doesn't focus on weight, but highlights change. What matters most is measuring this and to do that you need a device that offers repeatable measurements with precision."

Morrell talks about delivering Styku scans in health clubs across the world: "Used in the right way, having a 3D bodyscan can be a very humbling and motivational process which opens up an honest conversation with the client.

"They see a 3D version of themselves – in all its glory – and for some, this can be troubling but also the incentive they need to get healthy. At this point, it's over to the PT or fitness professional to lead the conversation and turn any negative emotion and any negative body image connotations into positive motivation that can be channelled by the user to reach their goals."

Regardless of the technology used, carrying out body scans does require a level of education, knowledge and skill from PTs and fitness professionals.

When interpreting these results, it's never been so vital for PTs to use their emotional intelligence to navigate the feelings and emotions of their members or clients in order to successfully guide them on their individual journeys.

As fitness professionals, they have a duty of care to understand how to interpret possible psychological warning signs that a client may present and in turn know how to offer expert support and adapt a training programme to meet their needs and deter them from fad diets.

Rob Thurston, UK country manager at Inbody says: "With the most recent advances in BIA Body Composition Testing (bioelectrical impedance analysis), the latest technology in devices such as the InBody can give fitness facilities clinical grade testing accuracy, along with a much wider range of body composition data that goes far beyond how much someone's body fat percentage is and whether that is within the 'normal range'.

"With direct segmental measurement, alongside body fat measurement, clients can now see a range of health-related information such as visceral fat level (which is correlated with type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease) and muscular imbalance between the left and right limbs or the upper and lower body.

"They can also see localised oedema (swelling) or hydration status, bone mineral levels, basal metabolic rate based on lean muscle mass and Phase Angle score to indicate cell membrane health and nutrition status," says Thurston.

Morrell continues: "The conversation around fitness and goal setting needs to shift away from body weight and look at overall feelings and results the user can see. When people refer to losing body weight, they often mean losing body fat,



With the most recent advances in BIA Body Composition Testing, the latest technology in devices such as the InBody can now give fitness facilities clinical grade testing accuracy

ROB THURSTON, INBODY

which is something completely different. A person can lose inches around their waist but not see much change in the number on the weight scale as they lose fat but gain lean muscle.

"Muscle is approximately 20 per cent denser than fat, so takes up less room. The beauty of a body scan is that it shows what a set of scales can't: how a person's shape is changing over time, which can lead to an increase in body positivity from knowing that progress is being made and the hard hours of sweating in the gym have been worth it.

"Body weight is not an accurate reflection of physical condition or fitness levels, so we need to educate health and fitness professionals on how to leverage this kind of fit-tech in order to empower exercisers to feel good about themselves."

Thurston agrees: "These results and outputs provide the opportunity for the fitness professional to look beyond body image and 'aesthetics' and discuss a more rounded approach to body composition, with guidelines to improve overall health, nutrition and functionality."



Even a less than favourable result can be turned into a positive if the client is suitably directed or redirected to modify their behaviour or routine accordingly

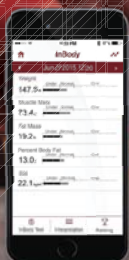
CHRIS ROCK, EXCELSIOR

EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

There is a need to move towards a more evidence-based approach, which prescribes health and wellness (including exercise) as a more holistic state of being where physical, mental and emotional health are all part of the same puzzle, reflected in the services the fit-tech sector and operators provide. With the right education, support and guidance, we can create positive environments, which help people to find and strengthen their intrinsic exercise motivation – leading to ►

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FS **COMMERCIAL
DIVISION**



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/DAN DROBOT

With pressure to be perfect, exercise professionals must be trained to deliver the correct interventions

healthy, long-term lifestyle behaviours that do not create body image issues.

Morrell adds: "When we work with PTs and gym owners, we spend a great deal of time talking and exploring how to translate the findings into meaningful plans that can deliver results and promote self-esteem. We avoid promoting body dissatisfaction as a motive for change, but, instead, we market and promote investing in overall health as a way to enhance body image, this is particularly important as we move towards a more wellness-based industry – driven largely by millennials."

Eric G Peake, managing director (north) from Healthcheck Services says: "The term 'body image' is how we perceive ourselves physically, and how we believe others to see us. People spend millions of pounds a year on the latest fad diets, but being thin doesn't necessarily equate to being healthy."

"The CoreVue body composition kiosk gives you an in-depth look into what's going on inside your body, so people are slowly starting to ditch the quick fix methods and using these machines as a tool to set achievable goals. They soon find that by being able to physically track

their results, they're automatically improving their body image in a positive way, while maintaining a healthy lifestyle."

THE FUTURE

Coming at a time when exercisers, particularly the younger age groups,



People spend millions of pounds a year on the latest fad diets and trends but being thin doesn't necessarily equate to being healthy

**ERIC G PEAKE,
HEALTHCHECK SERVICES**

notably millennials and Gen Z, see wellness as a focus of everyday life and something they're prepared to spend on, fit-tech is going to become more important to meet their demands. In fact, according to research company Forrester, 69 per cent of all fitness wearable owners come from one of those two age groups. That's why pioneering technology is set to play such a key role in providing the insights that health and fitness operators need to satisfy this new breed of members and support them on their individual paths to improve overall wellness.

While there's a clear gear change taking place within the industry, the future looks exciting, as fit-tech is constantly evolving to provide us with tools and insights that, previously, we could only dream of. But, as the saying goes, "with great power comes great responsibility," so it's vital that we ensure PTs and fitness professionals receive the right education, allowing them to support and empower members and clients, enabling them to appreciate the results they're achieving and build a positive self-image. ●

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Having motivated members
raises levels of intensity
within the gym for everyone

HCM

Fitness Foresight

- 1 TRAIN LIKE AN ATHLETE
- 2 FRANCHISING
- 3 LIVE STREAMING
- 4 BOXING
- 5 ASSISTED STRETCHING
- 6 BONE LOADING
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- 15 BOUTIQUES
- 16 LAST IMPRESSIONS
- 17 AGGREGATORS
- 18 CLIMBING
- 19 CIRCUIT WARS
- 20 RUNNING AND PARACHUTE

Numbers do not indicate a ranking

We know trends like wearables, HIIT training and functional fitness are hot, but what's coming down the track? Liz Terry looks further ahead for the latest edition of HCM's Fitness Foresight

RAISING THE GAME

1. TRAIN LIKE AN ATHLETE

The explosion of social media, specialist TV and the growing professionalism of sport has given star athletes huge reach, enabling us to understand their training and nutrition programmes and driving a trend we're calling 'Train like an Athlete'.

Ambitious gym members will demand support in ramping up their in-club training regimes to emulate their sporting icons.

The trend will be boosted by the growing expertise of PTs, exercise professionals and sports scientists who

are building careers in the industry, giving members access to support with technique and motivation.

The trend will impact the industry in areas such as gym floor layout, programming, group classes, the specification of equipment, marketing and endorsements.

It will enable operators to attract more sportspeople into membership and will bring some of the determination, stoicism, discipline and energy of sport into the gym, to the benefit of all members.



Franchising is suited to the current stage of the economic lifecycle for fitness

NEXT PHASE OF GROWTH

2. FRANCHISING

The current stage of the fitness market lifecycle is perfect for franchises, who can identify local markets and new customer groups and build business around these opportunities.

These types of operations suit entrepreneurs, who invest their own money and passion and are committed to delivering a personalised service and really driving the growth of their businesses, as it's challenging for corporates to work at this scale.

It's also a great opportunity for ambitious PTs who want to develop their careers. Many who started work in the sector during the rapid growth of the industry in the 2000s are now experienced and at a life stage where they need to support a family.

For them, the opportunity to own their own gym is very attractive and the more ambitious and entrepreneurial will be drawn to the many franchise packages that are coming on-stream, creating a strong source

of customers for franchise packages.

This trend is coinciding with changes on the high street, where retailers' profits are being undermined by online sales. This is forcing them to reduce the size of their estates and shed prime locations, and is opening up a source of vacant real estate to be repurposed for fitness.

This in turn is creating a good supply of sites that suit the needs of fitness franchise businesses and enable this market to grow.

GYM AS TV STUDIO

3. LIVE STREAMING

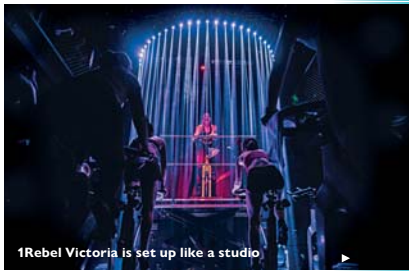
Content is king and the fitness market is seeing a battle for domination in the provision of content to be streamed for home and virtual workouts.

This trend is opening up opportunities for operators to partner with tech companies and suppliers to enable live streaming and filming in clubs.

We expect to see more gyms being designed like film

studios, with permanent camera mounting points and professional lighting systems to enable regular filming to take place.

We'll also see the development of more in-club televisual, clearly instructed workouts that work on virtual and live streaming, to enable operators to tap into this revenue source and brand-building marketing opportunity.



1Rebel Victoria is set up like a studio

INNER WARRIOR

4. BOXING

It's been a slow burn to get to this point, but we expect boxing-related gym concepts to experience a strong phase of growth over the next three years as more retiring boxing icons make their way into the fitness industry.

The combination of boxers' star pulling power, the TV profile of the sport and the popularity of boxing-based workouts for exercise and stress-relief for all sexes point to this as a potential area of growth – especially at the high end.



BXR is backed by boxing champion Anthony Joshua

PHOTO: BXR

STAY MOBILE

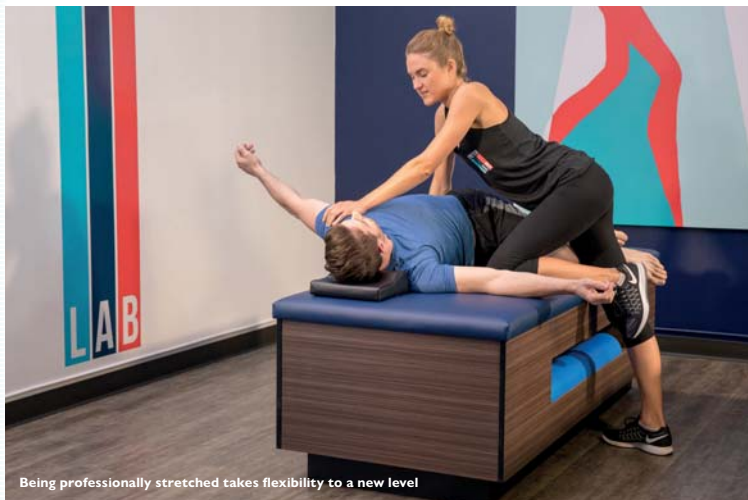
5. ASSISTED STRETCHING

Assisted stretching – an effective way to improve performance and mobility and avoid injury – is an emerging concept finding a market among both gym goers and athletes.

Being professionally stretched involves one-to-one sessions and gives more powerful results than stretching alone, as muscles can be eased past the point of natural resistance. The aim is for people to leave feeling invigorated, taller and with better posture.

Tight muscles compress joints and can wear them out too soon, while muscle imbalances can create problems and pain. Stretching every day is one of the key elements of any fitness regime, alongside strength and cardiovascular training, but it's often overlooked.

The emergence of assisted stretching as a business model is changing this attitude and opening up useful services for customers and good business for operators.



Being professionally stretched takes flexibility to a new level

PHOTO: STRETCH LAB



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/VAIBHOTO

Adding bone loading exercises to members' workout programmes will benefit their long-term health

AVOIDING OSTEOPOROSIS

6. BONE LOADING

Doing weight bearing activity is vital to good bone health. The stress placed on bones by exercises such as weight lifting stimulates the body to build bone mass.

Impact compresses the bone matrix, triggering it to take in calcium and other minerals and increasing bone density.

The weight bearing needed to get this response is called osteogenic loading – or bone loading – and when it comes to the impact of exercise, scientists measure activities according to how many multiples of body weight they load onto the skeleton.

A study at the University of Bristol in the UK looked at the loading needed to stimulate mineralisation in teenagers and found it was 4.2 times body

weight: if someone weighs 130 pounds, they need to load 546 pounds.

It's important to note that at rest, gravity applies a load that equals our bodyweight.

Activities such as running add a load, but exercises such as weight training, jumping or plyometrics are needed to achieve four times bodyweight and trigger the process.

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

While cycling and swimming have excellent health benefits, they 'unload' the bones, so exercisers who focus on these are advised to also do weight bearing activity to compensate.



Altitude training is becoming available to a wider population

AMPLIFY EXERCISE

7. ALTITUDE TRAINING

Altitude training has long been used by elite and professional athletes, but now this powerful amplifier is becoming more available to wider populations and we expect the health and fitness industry to embrace it going forward – for both exercise and active recovery.

Training or recovering in an oxygen depleted environment prompts the body to increase red blood cell count and improve performance. Loughborough University has even opened an on-site hotel with altitude rooms for athletes.



BUILD RESILIENCE

8. MENTAL HEALTH

Exercise is proven to support good mental health and help overcome mental health issues – it's as effective as drugs for treating mild to moderate depression, for example.

We expect more health and fitness operators to launch mental-health-related services and specialist mental health memberships, to support members who need ongoing access to this type of support.

Mental health services will be delivered in partnership with specialist organisations who are experienced in this area, to ensure people who need support are looked after by experts.



HCM expects health and fitness operators to begin offering reverse ageing programmes

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/FIXES

LIVE IN A YOUNGER BODY

9. REVERSE AGEING

Although nothing can be done to stop the clock on our chronological age, we now know how to reverse biological ageing, so we literally live in a younger body.

Work by Nobel Prize winner Dr Elizabeth Blackburn and health psychologist Dr Elissa Epel found telomeres – caps at the end of chromosomes, which protect them from deterioration – can be lengthened to reverse physical ageing with good lifestyle – a plant-based diet, sleep and exercise.

We expect Reverse Ageing programmes to increasingly be offered by fitness businesses.

This trend ties in with the industry's move to wellness, which is seeing health club operators collaborating with the wellness industry to deliver testing and personalised programmes around nutrition, lifestyle, mind/body and recovery.

The bad guys are obesity, sugar consumption, smoking and too much stress – these speed decline and hasten death.

ETHICAL CHOICES

10. VEGAN GYMS

As the trend towards veganism continues to develop momentum, the cohort of vegan consumers is reaching a scale that will soon support the creation of vegan gyms.

We expect to see a gym concept emerging that offers facilities that have been developed without the exploitation of animals, for example, with no leather, wool or other animal products present.

They will also have strong vegan F&B and retail offerings. The vegan focus could even be extended to include exercises designed for a vegan lifestyle.

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

11. BALANCE TRAINING

Having an excellent sense of balance is a fundamental element of good physical literacy – especially as people get older.

We expect balance training to grow in popularity as people increasingly appreciate the benefits of having a strong core and good balance for fitness, sport and the everyday.

The trend will drive growth in yoga and Pilates-related disciplines and also increase the use of balance-based exercise equipment which improves this skill in people of all ages.



Good balance is a key part of physical literacy

PHOTO: DJO GLOBAL



Fitness in the home is a fast-growing sector for both facilities and equipment

FITNESS LIFESTYLE

12. HOME FITNESS

Home workout brand, Peloton, has built a business with a US\$4bn valuation in just six years.

Now a raft of other suppliers and operators are moving into this market, with the launch of home streaming and equipment concepts.

We expect a blurring of boundaries between in-home and gym-based exercise, as consumers continue

to adopt a more portfolio-based approach to their exercise regimes.

This trend is being driven by apps and wearables, which enable consumers to both aggregate workout data and access cross-platform opportunities: Technogym has worked with major wearables to enable users of its Mywellness Cloud platform to replicate outdoor runs on a

treadmill in terms of times elapsed, gradient and speed, for example.

We expect this trend to lead to more people building home gyms.

Far from being a threat to the industry, this trend towards home fitness adds another layer to the engagement between consumers and operators, and opens opportunities for fitness brands to extend into the home market.

ULTIMATE UPSPELL

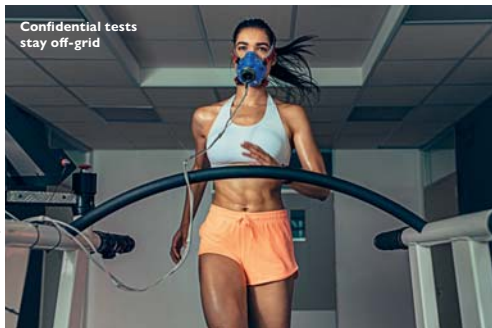
13. DIAGNOSTICS

We expect the diagnostics market to grow rapidly over the next ten years, with more new tests coming to market that can be delivered in health clubs.

In addition to being beneficial for tracking health and determining optimum workout and nutrition programmes, people are increasingly looking to do private health tests to avoid results appearing on their official medical records and increasing their insurance or life assurance premiums or invalidating their policies.

This will create business opportunities for the industry.

Confidential tests stay off-grid



INCREASING INTENSITY


14. AMPLIFIED WORKOUTS

A number of workout options are being driven by time-poor consumers looking for fast fitness solutions. These include things such as EMS Training (Electrical Muscle Stimulation), the cooling- and compression-based Vasper System of HIIT workouts and BFR (Bloodflow Restriction Training).

All are ways of amplifying the effects of exercise, meaning sessions are shorter and results faster. Some also need greater levels of supervision, as the stresses they put on the body mean they have to be carefully monitored and are not suitable for everyone's state of health and body type.

In some cases – EMS for example – the frequency of sessions needs to be managed to give the body time to recover, as the workout raises levels of creatinine in the blood.

EMS sessions take 20 minutes and are said to be the equivalent of a traditional 90-minute workout, while Vasper sessions take 21 minutes and are claimed to increase levels of growth hormones, while reducing cortisol. BFR is claimed to



EMS training is well established in Germany and now poised for global growth

achieve 12-week results in four weeks.

The clinical benefits of EMS are proven due to its extensive use in the German market and a solid body of research into the impacts. There's also a new DIN standard for the training of EMS trainers to ensure safety.

During an EMS session, electrical stimulation improves deep muscle tone and balances out the symmetry of the body. It also improves lymphatic drainage and circulation in the periphery, making it ideal for use by time-poor customers, athletes and

people who need rehabilitation.

Vasper was invented in the US and combines high-intensity exercise with cooling compression cuffs to amplify the effects.

We expect the trend towards amplified workouts to grow in terms of the number of facilities offering these options and the research base to prove their efficacy and optimal use for different populations.

This is all part of the move towards harnessing science to create offers that can be implemented in the wider market.

FIND YOUR TRIBE

15. BOUTIQUES

From sky diving to marathon running, we find our tribe through our leisure-time choices. This fact has never been better demonstrated than in the growth and success of boutique fitness studios.

Boutiques have disrupted the fitness industry by completely redefining the value of the market in terms of the amount consumers are prepared to pay to exercise.

They've done this by offering access to specialist training and equipment and a strong sense of belonging and community.

The business model – innovation, a targeted offer, a major focus on millennials or those with a millennial mindset and a high price point for high-end service can be applied to a range of modalities, from barre to cycle, making the model very nimble.

Although there are already a significant number of boutique types and hybrids, we expect to see continued innovation, with growth areas including Versaclimber and Gyrotonic studios, competitive running boutiques and EMS studios.

We also expect boutiques to continue to develop by merging modalities from health, fitness, wellbeing, physiotherapy, bodywork, collaborating with hotels, launching into home food delivery and tracking the next two generations to keep the offer relevant.

Boutiques will continue to thrive by staying relevant to successive generational types



PHOTO: COURTESY OF PSYCLE

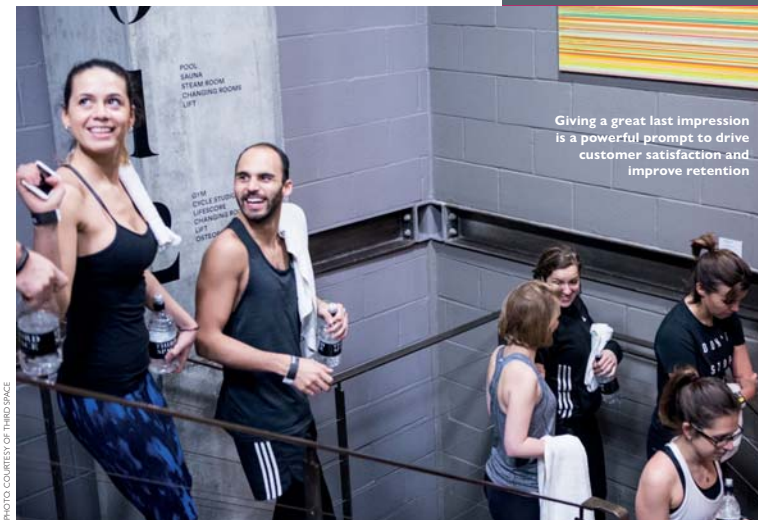


PHOTO COURTESY OF THIRD SPACE

Giving a great last impression is a powerful prompt to drive customer satisfaction and improve retention

BOOSTING RETENTION

16. LAST IMPRESSIONS

What can be done to improve retention across the health and fitness sector? It's a real Achilles heel and it would transform our fortunes if we could make even incremental improvements.

Research being applied in the wellness industry by Jeremy McCarthy at Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group may hold a key to unlocking ways to improve this important area, by changing the customer journey and focusing more on last impressions.

Looking at data from colonoscopies, doctors have found that the point in the procedure where discomfort is experienced has a bearing on the likelihood of the patient returning for a follow-up appointment.

If the discomfort is felt early on, they will return, but if it's felt near the end, they are less likely to – this last impression has an impact on future behaviour.

Apply this to the gym experience and

it's clear that many operators 'front-load' the customer journey, with a greeting, but fail to engage at the end, leaving members with a weak 'last impression'.

Balancing this out and working harder to send someone away having experienced a great last impression, by engaging with them at the end of their time in the club or gym, could have valuable benefits when it comes to improving levels of retention.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

17. AGGREGATORS

Many markets – from travel to real estate – now have a layer of aggregation when it comes to the interface with the consumer.

The health and fitness market is no different, with a number of business models being deployed to enable operators to optimise their yield management.

Aggregators' services are here to stay, with some operators embracing them and others

approaching them more cautiously or not engaging.

The future success of the relationship between operators and aggregators will depend on them developing services that are genuinely to their mutual advantage and which empower operators to still enjoy a direct relationship with the consumer.

If this happens, we predict this sector will continue to grow. ▶

Aggregators are targeting the fitness market

PHOTO COURTESY OF BANNATTINE





Climbing workouts are low impact and high intensity

LOW IMPACT

18. CLIMBING

One of the latest workouts making waves in the US is climbing, with 90s staple the Versaclimber making a comeback and we expect this trend to be picked up internationally over the next year.

Climbing ticks many important boxes as a form of exercise. It's high

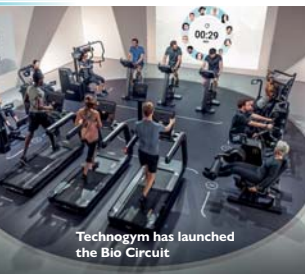
intensity and low impact – delivering a HIIT workout without the strain on joints – making it suitable for people of almost any age.

A climbing class delivers a whole body workout, making it an efficient way to exercise for both strength and CV fitness. It also offers a powerful workout

for the core, making it suitable for people who want to improve posture and back strength.

The growing interest in HIIT climbing workouts is mirrored in the growth of indoor sports climbing, which becomes an Olympic event for the first time at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic games.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF RESISTANCE



Technogym has launched the Bio Circuit

TOTAL WORKOUT

19. CIRCUIT WARS

We think workout circuits – pre-programmed timed workouts – will gain significant global momentum in the next three years, with competition growing between equipment and tech suppliers.

Circuits tick a lot of boxes for certain population groups, including time-poor and older populations, due to their ease of use, safety and effectiveness in terms of results.

Built-in functionality, such as personalised automatic settings and workout loads appeal for their

ease of use, allowing users to focus on the exercise, rather than grappling with settings and loads.

Where exercisers have a free choice of routine, some tend to opt for the easier options, and this can undermine results and lead to muscle imbalances. Circuits remove this issue, delivering complete workouts.

We expect circuit-based studios to proliferate as part of the boutique boom and to appeal to people who value this exercise option enough to pay a premium rate.



Parachute training is a fun way to benefit from a running-based workout

PHOTO COURTESY OF ASPIRA

ACCELERATING TREND

20. RUNNING AND PARACHUTE TRAINING

Running is growing in popularity as a sport, creating opportunities for gyms to offer running-specific workouts to engage more with the running population.

We expect this trend to accelerate as interest grows. We also expect it to

develop in new areas such as parachute training, where people run against resistance by trailing a parachute to increase intensity and load.

Parachute training can be done both indoors and outdoors and is already

starting to make an appearance at high end clubs, with a trickle-down effect likely. Some suppliers offer a parachute setting on their treadmills.

We also expect to see more running-based boutiques and franchises launching. ●

PRODUCT INNOVATION

Lauren Heath-Jones rounds up the latest product launches in health and fitness



Kaia Personal Trainer has potential to 'democratise sustainable fitness', says **Maximilian Strobel**

Kaia Health, a digital health specialist, has created a new personal training app that could be used in clubs to offer virtual personal training to its members.

The Kaia Personal Trainer app was developed with physiotherapists



"The Kaia Personal Trainer is a full-body workout in your pocket"

Maximilian Strobel

and fitness experts and combines AI-powered motion tracking technology with personalised training to offer customised full-body workouts.

To use the app, users simply stand several feet away from their smartphone camera and begin exercising with video instructions. The app then tracks the activity using a 16-point system that compares the metrics of actual movement against ideal movement and offers users personalised real-time audio feedback, advice and encouragement to improve fitness and performance.

Maximilian Strobel, head of the AI Lab at Kaia Health, says: "The app puts users in control of



Kaia Health offers users personalised feedback

their performance and becomes a part of their everyday routine.

"We're excited by our patent pending AI-powered motion tracking technology and virtual PT as it has the

potential to democratise access to sustainable wellness and fitness training worldwide."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
KAIA HEALTH

Physical Company app enables operators to create 'inspiring' workouts for members, says **John Halls**

Physical Company has developed an app that will give users access to a library of educational video content that will enable trainers to create 'inspiring and progressive' workouts using Physical Company equipment.

According to a release, the free-to-download app will be 'constantly updated' to offer relevant workout designs, as well as to reflect the company's evolving product portfolio, while push notifications will alert users to new products, workouts and exercises.

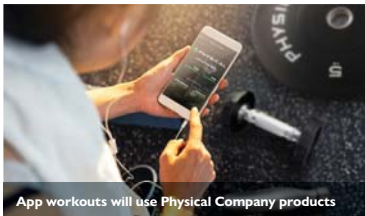
For operators and commercial users, the app includes promotional



"This app makes it possible to access literally thousands of workout videos and coaching tips, all designed to support the diverse product range we supply"

John Halls

material for the company's APEX programmes and Evo Bench and will give users direct access to its product



App workouts will use Physical Company products

brochures, providing purchasing capability.

John Halls, MD at Physical Company, says: "Over the last few years the fitness sector has been driven by technological innovations. This app makes it possible

to access literally thousands of workout videos and coaching tips, all designed to support our diverse product range."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD
PHYSICAL COMPANY



The 'TRX for Yoga' workshop shows instructors how TRX can be used to assist and challenge yoga practice

'TRX® for Yoga' education fuses suspension training and yoga, says **Julian Woolley**

TRX®, the industry leader in functional training and creator of TRX Suspension Training® bodyweight exercises, has expanded its commercial education offerings with the release of a range of 'TRX for Yoga' workshops.

These provide yoga studios, practitioners, health clubs and gyms with a cutting-edge take on the yoga experience that can enable facilities to differentiate their group education, while increasing both member acquisition and retention.

'TRX for Yoga' is a professional education workshop designed to

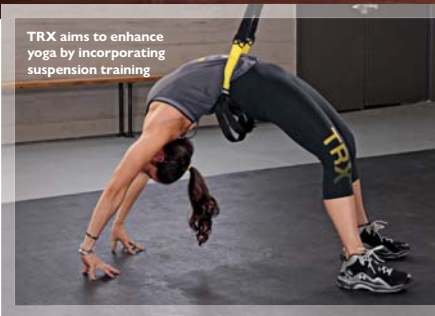
provide trainers with the essential knowledge, skills and abilities to effectively incorporate TRX Suspension Training® and postures into their classes with yoga-inspired movements.

MERGING DISCIPLINES

The workshop delivers the education to perform and lead classes to increase strength and flexibility, while allowing scalability throughout different yoga poses. It also allows instructors to incorporate modules of the course into their existing yoga class, using the fusion to assist and challenge yoga practice, making for an ideal way to merge the two disciplines of suspension training and yoga.

Julian Woolley, TRX country manager, UK and Ireland, comments: "Yoga is popular and effective but in today's ever-evolving world of changing up routines to avoid plateauing, it's important to mix up workouts by incorporating various tools, including TRX, which is a natural fit. The launch of

TRX aims to enhance yoga by incorporating suspension training



this education course emphasises the powerful fusion of suspension training and yoga.

Our emphasis goes beyond 'products' and provides real solutions that enhance the training experience and positively impact membership and revenue goals, which is exactly what this new offering represents."

THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

Matt Gleed, TRX master trainer, adds: "Combining suspension training with yoga is further testimony to the versatility and efficacy of the TRX Suspension Trainer. TRX is more than a company

just making a product, we provide a solution and the education to make it an all-encompassing package. We believe this course respects the integrity and powerful mind-body benefits of yoga, while at the same time, enhancing the experience with suspension training principles, and that's something we're very proud of."

To find out more about the TRX for Yoga education workshops coming to the UK this year, or to register your interest, visit www.trxtraining.co.uk call +44 (0) 7305 964969

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

TRX



Our emphasis goes beyond 'products' and provides real solutions that enhance the training experience

Julian Woolley

► Ben Steadman on Pulse x Limitless partnership

Pulse Fitness has signed a long-term distribution agreement with Limitless Gym Equipment, that will see the company become the exclusive distributor of a range of Limitless products including the innovative Free Trainer Pro machine.



"We believe Pulse is the perfect partner to help us drive further into the UK and European markets"

Ben Steadman

Designed to be used by everyone, regardless of experience or ability, the Free Trainer Pro combines plate-loaded and functional resistance options to allow users to perform over 150 exercises. It was developed in partnership with a host of fitness experts including athletes, conditioning coaches and physiotherapists.

It features a unique bearing system that enables fluid movement, simulating the sensation of a free weight, while additional weight plates and resistance bands add a different variation of external loading.

Other products in the range include the Free Trainer Active Pro and Free Trainer Dual Pro, developed



Pulse Fitness will be exclusive distributor for Limitless

specifically for gyms with limited floor space.

All products feature the ergonomically-designed the Tri-Grip™ handle system, which has been designed to alleviate stress on joints and reduce the risk of injury.

Ben Steadman, business development director at Pulse, says: "The Limitless Free Trainer revolutionises plate-loaded and resistance training in one compact station that allows users

to choose from hundreds of exercises to perform. These unique machines complement our existing premium product range and will bring fresh challenges to trainers and members alike."

Ricky Lee, director of Limitless, says: "We're excited to be working with such a forward-thinking equipment brand."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS

PULSE FITNESS

Hutchison tech upgrade transforms exercise experience, says **John McCafferty**

Fitness AV specialist Hutchison Technologies has completed a major fit out at the Dundee International Sports Complex (DISC), in Dundee, Scotland.

Working closely with operator Leisure & Culture Dundee, Hutchison completed an AV and lighting upgrade to

transform the cycle studio and exercise area into a 'modern, flexible space' that will enhance the customer experience and offer memorable exercise experiences.

The studio now boasts a fleet of state-of-the-art Life Fitness ICG bikes offering a Coach by Colour intensity guide, Watt

rate power metre and device connectivity giving exercisers the power to personalise, view and track their workouts and performance. The bikes combined with the new digital tech supplied by Hutchison creates a memorable exercise experience for members and trainers alike.

John McCafferty, business improvement manager at Leisure & Culture Dundee, says: "We were looking to develop the studio space to give our customers a more diverse and enhanced fitness area and cycle studio, whilst providing flexibility around scheduled classes."

"The team at Hutchison Technologies was able to consult and advise on the best methods to do this; which has included the integration of instructor controls into our studio and



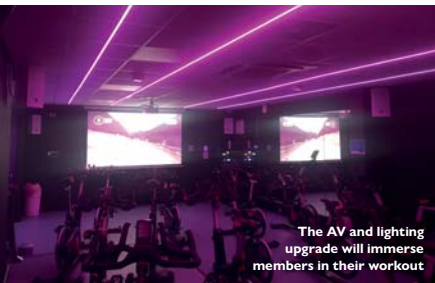
"We were looking to develop the studio space to give our customers a more diverse and enhanced fitness area and cycle studio"

John McCafferty

exercise area and of course the fantastic feature and effect lighting to immerse members in their workout, alongside the virtual class function which will now support our popular timetabled cycle classes."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

HUTCHISON TECHNOLOGIES



The AV and lighting upgrade will immerse members in their workout



Older Power Plate models can be traded up for new models

Power Plate is launching a trade in, trade up programme, explains **Daivide Ferreira**

To celebrate its 20th Anniversary, Power Plate is pleased to launch its new Trade In, Trade Up programme, enabling clubs to change their current product and upgrade to a new model, for a limited period.

If a facility has one or more Power Plate machines, registered before 2014, and in good working order, they could be eligible to save up to £1,700 on their new Power Plate model.*

Power Plate plans to donate some of the existing products that are swapped for new ones to their chosen charities.

ENHANCED MOVEMENT

Power Plate is a vibrating platform that helps users prepare faster, perform better and recover quicker. It makes you feel better by stimulating natural reflexes, increasing muscle activation and improving circulation.

Power Plate enhances any movement, simple or complex, which is typically performed on the ground.

Power Plate can be integrated with other equipment or utilised as

a standalone solution, allowing PTs and operators to refresh their offering, drive differentiation, increase engagement and create a stronger exerciser experience.

As fitness continues to evolve, Power Plate works seamlessly with today's clients and members to deliver accelerated health, fitness and wellness results. With incredible versatility in one product, Power Plate caters to a wide variety of demographics,



"The beauty of this program is that no matter how old the product, it will be eligible for trade in, giving health clubs the opportunity to offer something new to their members at an exceptional price point"

Daivide Ferreira



populations, exercises, training styles and activities to create faster results in less time.

TRADE UP

"The beauty of this programme is that no matter how old the product, it will be eligible for trade-in, giving health clubs the opportunity to offer something new to their members at an exceptional price point" said Daivide

Ferreira, commercial key accounts sales manager at Power Plate.

The programme will run until December 2019, with a five-year price promise on subsequent Power Plate trade-ins for 2020.

Find out more about trade in, trade up, contact: sales@powerplate.com or call +44 20 7317 5000

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD**
POWERPLATE

hutchison
technologies



creating outstanding experiences | since 1991

audio visual | feature & effect lighting | access control
smart cards & wearables | data & telecoms

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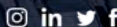
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Augie and Lynne Nieto founded Augie's Quest to find a cure for ALS

PHOTO: LYNNE NIETO

Augie Nieto

The Life Fitness entrepreneur and ALS charity fundraiser is returning to the business that made his name

This issue of HCM we celebrate the return of industry legend Augie Nieto to Life Fitness. Nieto served as president from 1977 to 2000 and helped transform the company from a single-product business to one of the world's largest commercial fitness equipment suppliers.

Nieto's diagnosis with ALS in 2005 and subsequent battle with the disease is well documented, as is his contribution to a cure, which saw him establish a global charity, Augie's Quest, with his wife, Lynne.

So far, the organisation has raised over US\$75m towards research into a cure and Nieto's strength, resolve and bravery in battling the disease has won him the respect of the industry and the wider business community.

Life Fitness says Nieto will return as a co-investor in the business and will also be appointed to its board of directors.

The move follows the acquisition of the company by KPS Capital Partners in July, which has been followed by a shake up of the management team and board.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Life Fitness was valued at US\$490m (€434m, £388m) at the time of the deal, which was below its previous valuation and the new owners are moving to drive business growth.

Jay Bernstein, partner at KPS said, "We're thrilled to bring Augie back as an investor and a strategic partner. We're confident that his experience and vision will help Life Fitness drive forward its legacy of being a strong, focused, and innovative global market leader."

Life Fitness has also appointed Chris Clawson as its CEO, succeeding the outgoing Jason Worthy.

The company's family of fitness brands includes Life Fitness, Hammer Strength, Cybex, Indoor Cycling Group and SCIFIT – all brought into the group by acquisition.

As Life Fitness has not yet optimised these investments, it will be interesting to see how strategy develops going forward under the new leadership and with Nieto back on the team.

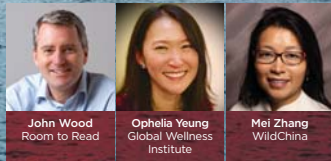
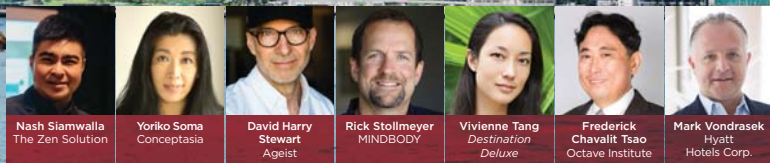
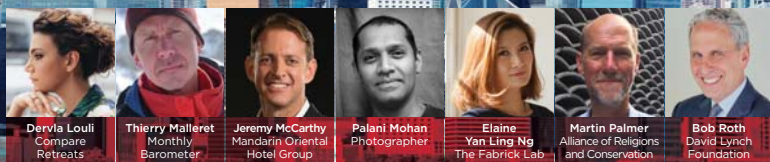
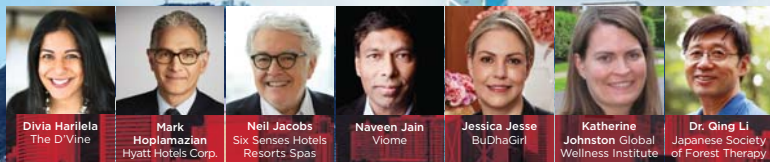
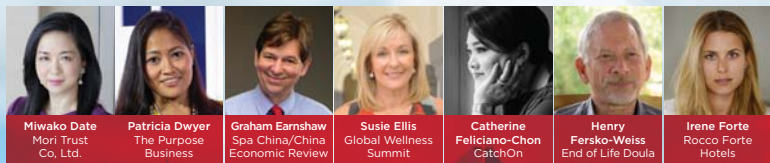
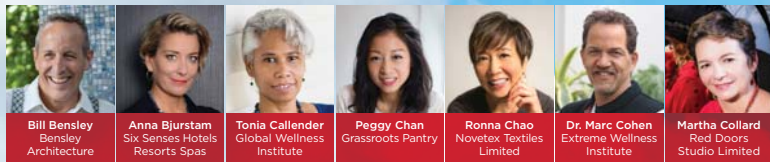
Nieto has held numerous other non-exec and advisory roles and currently serves as an operating advisor to North Castle Partners while being on the board of Curves, Jenny Craig and Hydromassage.

You can donate to Augie's Quest at: <https://augiesquest.org>



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