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Glenn Earlam

The CEO of David Lloyd
Leisure on new models and
growing the estate **p38**



Rene Moos

Insights into
Basic-Fit **p66**

Emma Barry

How to build a badass boutique **p58**



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- Harvard Business Review



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All change

COVID-19 is the reality we'll be living with until a vaccine can be developed and this challenge will test the resilience and adaptability of our sector. Don't wait for things to return to 'normal' – start adapting right now

It's hard to escape the feeling that we're in the middle of a Hollywood movie, as events relating to COVID-19 unfold around us and the extraordinary and the unthinkable become the everyday. Who could have predicted that all flights from Europe to the US could ever be grounded?

With major disruptions announced by the minute around the clock – from school closures to the suspension of major events – the long-predicted global pandemic has swiftly arrived.

So how is the health and fitness industry responding and what will the impacts be on our sector in the short- and medium-term?

In this issue, we talk to CEOs Humphrey Cobbold of Pure Gym and Clive Ormerod of Les Mills, about their inspiring responses. In the hours between now and when we publish, their positions may change, but we believe it's valuable to track progress.

Although the macro picture may eventually impact the sector if economic disruption leads to falling income levels, as a largely subscription-based business, health clubs should be able to withstand some business interruption in the short-term, as gym closures in Italy, Spain, Sweden and so on come into effect.

The straightforward measure of extending membership will minimise the immediate economic impact, create positive goodwill and may even improve retention.

Boutiques, with their pay-as-you-go model, are more exposed to the impact and COVID-19 will stress-test their resilience and the commitment of their tribes, especially those with no digital outreach in the form of live streaming, or on-demand.

The pandemic will accelerate the adoption of fitness tech, with operators moving to line up digital, home-based workouts to keep members active if they're self-isolating and hungry to move.

We'll also see a surge in interest in outdoor workouts, as 'social distancing' becomes a part of life and people find ways to exercise in the fresh air while keeping the recommended distance apart.

The situation will expose the self-employed status of many PTs and – just as Deliveroo is making payments to its zero-hours delivery workers if they get the virus – so the fitness industry must step up and support PTs who are in difficulty.

So what of the longer-term? Now the virus is active among the population and looking less as though it's seasonal, we'll be living with it rumbling on until a vaccine is developed.

This means its presence in our lives is the new reality and we need to adapt. The sooner we start this process the better.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/COOLSTUDIO

Outdoor exercise with social distancing will be a trend

Genuine and well-intentioned engagement around health and resilience will find a more receptive audience going forward

Don't expect things to return to 'normal' any time soon – harness the creativity of your team and start innovating.

A virus of this type sees humans at their most exposed – there are no fast fixes, no pills that can be taken. Our only defence is the state of our health and our immune system.

It would be inappropriate for us as an industry to cynically exploit this situation for financial gain, but we may find that genuine and well-intentioned engagement around health and resilience will find a more receptive audience going forward.

Most important is our role in boosting morale, as this crisis will be especially challenging for people with mental health issues.

Liz Terry, editor
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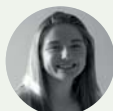
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Proper stretching technique is essential

Dan Rees, commercial director, Premier Global NASM

I just wanted to express a view regarding a feature you ran in the January issue of HCM (Page 20-23) featuring a company called Flexology.

Several of the images show a considerable degree of stress being placed on vulnerable joints, with insufficient application of support or stabilisation. I am not in a position to comment on the credentials of Flexology or the experience of the practitioners featured in the images, but suggest this small selection of images featured do not support techniques we would endorse.

Assisted stretch can be hugely beneficial, improving mobility, stability and performance but the practice is very specialist and, if not performed correctly, there is a high risk of damage to ligaments, tendons and muscles. This can lead to joint instability, pain and



Dan Rees

ongoing mobility issues. It is, therefore, imperative that practitioners are adequately trained and have a full, in-depth understanding of the biomechanical and anatomical impact of their application.

Our students are taught basic and progressive assisted stretch techniques as part of the Level 3 Personal Training Diploma.

Students who wish to



“Assisted stretch can improve mobility and performance, but the practice is specialist and – if not performed correctly – there’s a risk of damage”

extend their knowledge and practice in the area are advised to also complete The NASM Corrective Exercise Specialisation (NASM-CES). Here, techniques are incorporated into our four-step programme, The Corrective Exercise Continuum (CEC). This scientifically proven programme is designed to reduce muscular dysfunction,

supporting clients in a quest to move, feel and live better.

HCM produces some excellent content and I am an avid supporter. I therefore feel I have a duty to question content that does not reflect what I believe, through years of training and education, to be true. I would be very interested to hear the views of other readers on this particular topic.

RIGHT TO REPLY

Tim Kayode, programme coordinator at Flexology

Qualified sports therapist and fascia stretch therapy (FST) Level 2 practitioner

All our Flexperts have been trained in our scientifically-backed assisted stretching method and prior to training, everyone is assessed to ensure they have an in-depth knowledge of anatomy and physiology.

We don't want to give away our techniques, but our model has been inspired by FR and FRC. All of our Flexperts are highly trained and come from therapeutic backgrounds such as soft tissue, sports therapy, fascia stretch therapy and others.

All three in the pictures are qualified, so the knowledge we have in stretching, anatomy and physiology, rehab and manual therapy is more advanced than any PT qualification.

Further, it's important to note that assisted stretching technique cannot be assessed from a marketing picture.

With regards to the hamstring stretch with unsupported knee, that is dependent on the client, as we deal with their individual issues. The picture in question shows someone who is highly flexible and is in the middle of an isometric contraction. If you give the knee too much support, this can lead to hyperextension.

The picture that depicts a glute stretch shows one of the ways that the stretch can be done by a female therapist. Because of the female anatomy, it cannot be done the same way as the male therapist would do this.

The stretches pictured are not part of the corrective exercise continuum programme, so it is not relevant to mention this here.

We understand the corrective exercise protocol covers the lengthening of muscles with a four-step process, however, we follow a protocol designed specifically for assisted stretching.

Our focus is assisted stretching and we are not a rehabilitation clinic and do not claim to be.

First response

As the world unites to tackle COVID-19, we ask two industry leaders to share insights into their initial response to the challenge

Humphrey Cobbold, CEO, Pure Gym

This is a highly unusual situation and there's a lot of uncertainty about how to progress. It's currently taking up about 50 to 75 per cent of my time and five of my senior management team are working on it full-time as well.

We're planning for the worst, while hoping for the best. Our priority at this time is absolutely people before profits, a position which our investors are strongly backing. All of our decisions are being made based on safeguarding the wellbeing of our staff and members. Affordability is not a factor.

We've upgraded the cleaning in our clubs, both the amount we're cleaning and the depth of the cleans, with special focus on contact surfaces. We're also increasing the availability of wipe down sprays and sanitisers for members – use of hand sanitiser has increased tenfold.

Added to this, we're increasing public awareness in relation to the importance of hygiene and hand washing and telling our members not to come to the clubs if they feel unwell in any way at all.

So far I've been really impressed with the resolve of the public to carry on as normal: to keep coming to the gym and to be fit and healthy, as their first line of defence against all types of illnesses.

We monitor gym visits carefully and it's only in the last week that we've seen the first sign of the average number of visits being slightly down on where we would expect it to be at this time of year.

Our head office staff are all working from home today, as a test for if we have to close the office in coming weeks – which has worked really well.

As a company we're dependent on technology, so our 50-strong technology team are currently working from home as standard and only coming in to the office when a meeting is needed. We're relying on them to keep our communications with our members seamless, as well as keep the app updated, so it's vital they continue to work.

Through ukactive, we've been in close contact with Public Health England, and the equivalent agencies in Scotland and Wales, and have collaborated with the



Pure Gym investors are strongly backing a policy of people before profit

industry to create a set of guidelines. These set out protocols of what to do if a club member, or a member of staff, tests positive for the virus.

The standard position is that the club would be closed, thoroughly cleaned and then reopened. If this is the case, members would be able to use alternative Pure Gyms, or workout at home via the app.

In terms of positives, there's been a very good degree of collaboration and sharing of best practice among operators, uniting against a common enemy.

Going forward I think this crisis might increase awareness and standards of cleanliness and hygiene, as well as highlighting to everyone the importance of exercising and staying fit to boost the immune system. ►

“

Our priority at this time is absolutely people before profits. All our decisions are being made based on safeguarding the wellbeing of our staff and members

Humphrey Cobbold





Les Mills on Demand is being offered free for two months in impacted markets

Clive Ormerod, CEO, Les Mills

Responding to the coronavirus has been a priority for Les Mills since early January, when the scale of the problem became apparent. We've established an internal task force to come together and act quickly, to respond to breaking events, communicate clearly with our tribe and customers, stabilise our supply chains, and coordinate everything we are doing globally. We're meeting daily, and prioritising as we go. Our key focus through all of this has been the safety of our team mates, the club partners we work with and the Les Mills instructors around the world – our tribe.

Our China team has been dealing with this challenge the longest and have been extremely professional and proactive. They've been working remotely for two months, with our Japan team doing the same, so we've been able to learn from their experiences: specifically, our ability to provide our club partners with the digital tools and assets, [such as home workouts, Les Mills on Demand], to enable them to continue to engage with their members.

We've tested online instructor workshops with some innovative approaches and the response from instructors has been really interesting. As a team, we have the digital product and platforms within our business, so we're looking to use this moment to help clubs connect with their members in new and unique ways – we're learning a lot.

With our instructors it's all about making sure they have the right information and access to the content that will allow them to stay safe and keep teaching, and also that they can communicate effectively and reassuringly with members. Where instructors have had to stay home we've helped lift spirits with challenges from our programme directors to keep them active.

For our club customers this is definitely an opportunity to support them with tools to keep members engaged, even if some have to stay home.

Clubs without a digital solution are looking for help to find one, fast, so we're making it as easy as possible for them to offer our Les Mills on Demand service. In impacted markets, like Japan and the Middle East, we're making this free for club members for two months.

The challenge for all businesses is to respond fast to a changing environment and to work together to minimise business impacts. There's no doubt these are testing times, but part of being a good corporate citizen means supporting others in the wider industry and community.

The message that by exercising and staying fit you are already building the best defences against illness and disease is certainly one that we are emphasising. It would be great to think that out of this crisis there might be a silver lining of increased public awareness of the value of regular exercise, and we'll certainly do our bit to make sure that happens. ●

A man with short brown hair, a light beard, and black-rimmed glasses is smiling. He is wearing a dark navy blue button-down shirt. He is standing in front of a large window with a dark frame. The background is slightly blurred, showing an office or modern building interior.

“

*“Our China team has
been dealing with this
crisis the longest, so
we have been able
to learn from their
experiences”*

Clive Ormerod



Although we're now ambitious about creating a global lifestyle brand, initially there wasn't a grand masterplan – we just thought it would be fun to open a local gym and that has spiralled...

ED STANBURY

BLOK: CEO AND CO-FOUNDER

How did BLOK come about?

I went to look at a warehouse in Upper Clapton for my property and construction company and fell in love with the Victorian tram depot next door. It had stunning original features – vaulted ceilings and cast iron pillars – but was in a serious state of disrepair so was standing vacant. I offered a low rent and the landlord accepted.

I'm quite entrepreneurial – if I see a deal I usually take it and then work out what to do with it afterwards. So I found that I had an amazing building, with around 2,500sq ft of left-over space. I started asking my friends for ideas and Max Oppenheim, a high end fashion

photographer, suggested turning it into a film and photo shoot location.

At that time Max and I were doing a lot of boxing and yoga and my wife, Reema, had started going to class-based gyms. We began to think it would be more interesting to open a boutique studio, with boxing and yoga.

Although we're now ambitious about creating a global lifestyle brand, initially there wasn't a grand masterplan – we just thought it would be fun to open a local gym and that has spiralled.

What was your design vision?

We really wanted to create a space which has a vibe to it, not just somewhere with

loud pumping music and dark rooms.

Our inspiration has come more from the restaurant and bar sector – where it's a labour of love to design, build and curate an experience. I don't believe we've really seen that in fitness yet.

Because of our location, we couldn't rely on having the heavy footfall of a high density area, so we set out to create an environment where people would want to hang out together – somewhere our friends would like.

We designed as we went along, sometimes we had to take down walls which had just gone up. Still, it only took four months to complete and we opened on 1st February 2016.



BLOK Shoreditch, the second to open, with design by Daytrip Studio

BLOK founder, Ed Stanbury, is building a global lifestyle brand

► Within three weeks of the launch, *Wallpaper* voted BLOK one of the 30 coolest gyms in the world and *Harpers Bazaar* said it was one of the best gyms in London. As we were so small, we were always full, which added to the reputation.

To cope with demand, we rented another unit and turned it into a dedicated boxing studio – we kept all the original features and just added a ring and hung the bags off the original beams – it looks very raw.

This studio has been a backdrop for major shoots with brands such as Adidas, Apple and Under Armour and is definitely one of our most iconic spaces.

I don't want to overplay the art element, but at the same time it's a key part of what makes us unique in the industry. It's part of the overall experience, creating an environment where you want to spend time. To this end, we have partnered with amazing artists like Arran Gregory and Ben Cullen Williams, both of whom have permanent exhibitions and sculptures at our sites.

What were the main challenges of launching a gym?

Arguably, having zero knowledge of the industry was a challenge, but it did mean we were open to ideas. We overcame this by sourcing great teams and giving them autonomy to make decisions.

Many operators want to have complete consistency across the brand, but we want to be constantly evolving, changing and adapting, so we encourage our instructors to try new things and make the classes different every time.



BLOK is planning to open four new clubs in 2020

You launched a third club, in Manchester, in September, how did this come about?

We were approached by amazing restaurant operators, Bistrottheque, to be the fitness operator in an exciting development they were involved in, in a Victorian warehouse in Manchester, and we said yes right away.

We've made a real effort to integrate with the local community and businesses and tell them what we're doing in advance and have found that people have bought into the concept. From our point of view, the market in Manchester isn't that much different to London.

We've found that people have just as much disposable income and as much desire for the experience. What's been more of a challenge is recruiting instructors, as many didn't have as much experience in group training, so we needed to provide extra training, but now we have a strong team that rival our London instructor base.

BLOK ran its first retreat this year, are there plans for more?

Yes, we're planning to build it into a sizeable arm with at least 10 and up to 20 retreats each year. We might even look at having some permanent retreats. However, in 2020 we'll be looking to open four new clubs in London, so we'll only be running one or two retreats this year as we need to prioritise the core business.

We already announced the first retreat for 2020, which will be hosted at a former French cognac estate. Each morning starts with a run, followed by



Stanbury is planning a move into digital fitness, using existing facilities as backdrops



Some of BLOK's spaces have been used for photoshoots by brands such as Apple

meditation. Every day there's a yoga class and a fitness class and either a longer yoga or fitness workshop. This year we'll have a nutritionist and chef who'll be preparing mainly plant-based food designed to go with the training regime.

It's all about community, building strength and skills-based progression. It's not a bootcamp or about weight loss.

A week's retreat is a great opportunity for our members to immerse themselves in an experience and make new connections and gives us another platform to engage with our community.

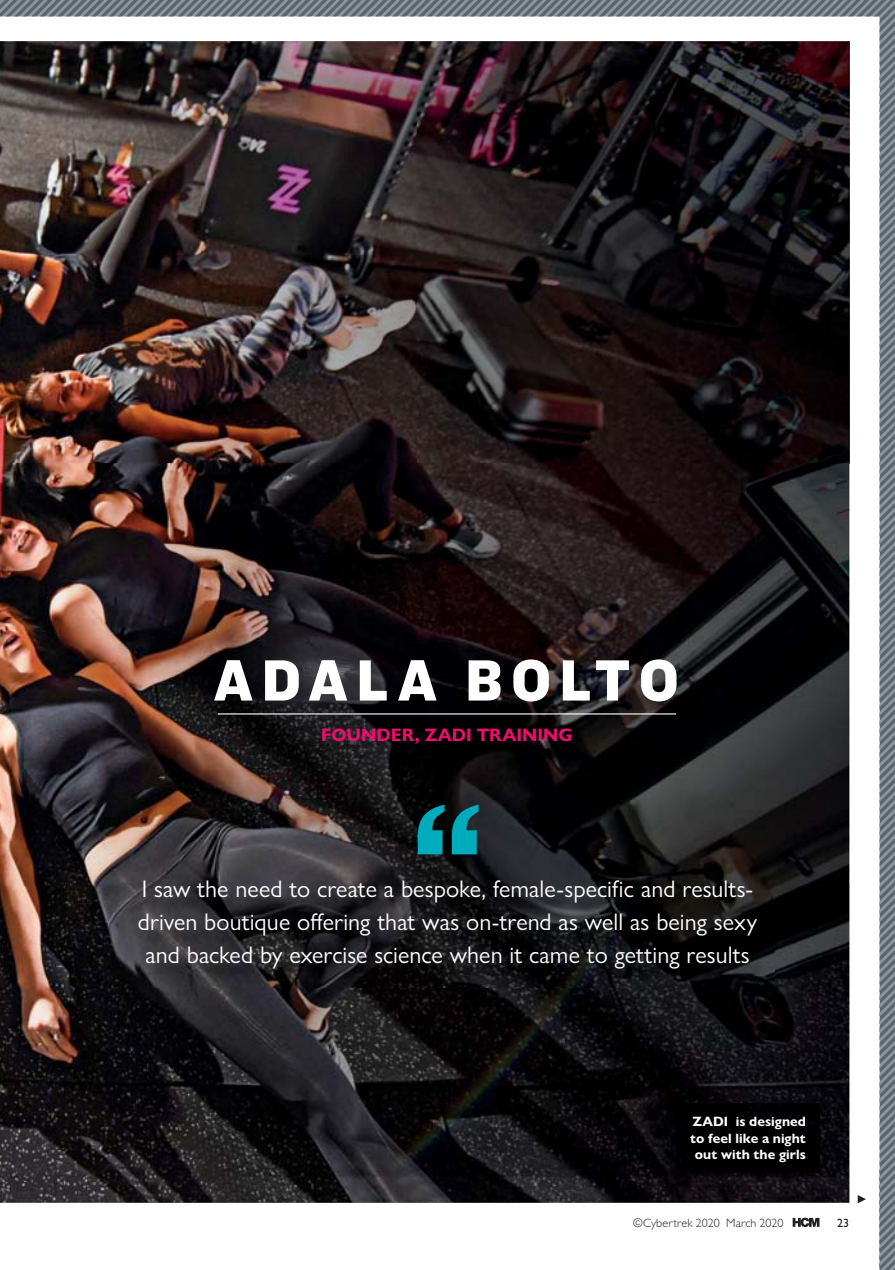
What other plans do you have?

We're fundraising for expansion, including a move into digital fitness this year. This will allow us to take the brand beyond the studios to a wider audience who either live too far away or can't afford classes. We have amazing spaces to use as backdrops, great videographers and more than 200 instructors, so we have the potential to create so much content. ●

■ BLOK – KEY FACTS

- There are currently three BLOK sites – Clapton, Shoreditch and Manchester, with plans to open four more in London in 2020.
- This high-end concept comprises studios for group exercise, changing rooms, reception area, art gallery and a café.
- The brand has been built on art, architecture and a highly designed environment, where people want to spend time.
- Classes are focused on building strength, skills and progression in order to keep clients coming back. There are strength and conditioning workouts, as well as yoga, barre, boxing and calisthenics.
- Each studio offers between 160 and 180 classes a week.
- Prices vary across the three sites, with a single class costing £15 in Manchester and Clapton and £17 in Shoreditch. Prices drop significantly if you commit for 12 months, with 10 class-a-month memberships costing just £84 in Manchester and Clapton and £100 in Shoreditch.
- Retreats and digital fitness are also in the pipeline.





ADALA BOLTO

FOUNDER, ZADI TRAINING

“

I saw the need to create a bespoke, female-specific and results-driven boutique offering that was on-trend as well as being sexy and backed by exercise science when it came to getting results

ZADI is designed
to feel like a night
out with the girls

Adala Bolto plans to grow the ZADI brand through franchising



► What's your background?

I've been working in the fitness industry in almost every role for almost 15 years now. I started training after having my second baby – having put on 20kgs while I was on maternity leave, I decided to get qualified as a trainer and instructor.

I started working for Fernwood Fitness, a large female-only gym in Australia, and became the club manager. I later decided to buy the gym and became the franchisee. From there I continued to successfully grow my gym and business. Most recently, I've founded the new female fitness brand and boutique studio, ZADI Training.

How did the idea for ZADI come about?

To me, there seemed to be an obvious big gap in the market. Working in the female fitness space for so many years, I witnessed the explosive growth in boutique studios, which is being driven by women – they make up almost 80 per cent of users.

Women's needs and expectations have changed significantly and they now want more from their gym – they're choosing who they train with, how they train and where based on results, experience and, most importantly, culture.

I saw the need to create a bespoke female-specific and results-driven

boutique offering that was on trend, as well as being sexy and backed by exercise science when it came to getting results.

Tell us more about ZADI

ZADI is bespoke female-specific strength and HIIT training that's designed for today's extraordinary women who want to succeed in life!

Our training is purely based on exercise science so it works to give our

clients the long term results they want – fast and without following fads.

Think of a girls night out in the club with a CrossFit styled athletic session involved, but without the competitive side – we don't compare ourselves at ZADI, instead we focus on our own growth and results.

Sessions are capped at smaller numbers for personalisation and focus on teaching our women to have great form.

We have two locations in Sydney.

How have you made the workout 'female-specific'?

Our workouts are based on the FITT principle, which stands for Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type. This is the most metabolically effective way for women to get fit and toned fast.

As women, our bodies are better at endurance and require different rest periods, so for example, we may include more repetitions on some days and then lift heavier on other days, taking into consideration our female bodies' needs.

Then there are the obvious things, including the weights we use, our focus on core and booty, and the look and feel of our studios.

What kind of women does the brand attract?

ZADI attracts women of all ages but the



Get Sh*t Done is the brand statement from ZADI



Studios are designed to create a nightclub vibe

majority of our clients are between 16 and 34. ZADI women connect with our 'Get Sh*t Done' tagline as they are very busy and have a full-on social life.

They're tech savvy and know what they want, they're confident and don't fall for bullshit fads. They're also strong, ambitious professionals. They train to look and feel amazing and are not obsessed with gym life, it's just one part of their life that allows them to maintain their lifestyle.

Tell us about the club design and environment

Typically, our demographic is not obsessed with training and just love a good time with their girlfriends. So the nightclub atmosphere and vibe was a no brainer – every workout we deliver is strong but also feels like a night out with the girls where you unleash your inner badass and de-stress while training.

Why did you decide to make ZADI a franchise? What are your plans for the brand?

Women have changed globally and I wanted ZADI to cater to strong women everywhere. Of course, I also researched the boutique fitness growth globally and am confident that with the right execution and partners ZADI can be the 'Sephora' equivalent to this demographic,



in the fitness space. We are very aligned with the beauty industry and I see this as a huge opportunity when it comes to our brand's global growth plans.

Are there any new clubs or plans in the works?

We've only been open for one year and are about to embark on our growth

journey to launch the franchise business and scale the brand globally.

We're talking to a few parties who are interested in master franchising licenses for ZADI outside of Australia, but it's early days with these conversations and so we're working hard to make sure we will be ready for these opportunities when they come to fruition.



**Brooks-Thornett's PT
sessions take advantage of
Cornwall's natural beauty**



A donation-based payment system creates a non-discriminatory environment and empowers people to give what they think the service is worth. This also challenges me to keep service levels high

AARON BROOKS-THORNETT

FREELY GIVEN PT: FOUNDER

What's your USP as a PT?

Nature is a great healer and offers the chance to be playful, so I conduct my sessions outdoors as much as possible.

As I'm based in Cornwall, I like to meet clients at the beach, or in the woods, and we do a mixture of cardio and bodyweight exercises using minimal equipment.

I encourage them to appreciate what they have on their doorstep, as many of them don't make the most of the natural environment that's all around them.

As our physical, mental and emotional selves are all connected – for example if you put on weight it's not just your body which is affected – I like to take a holistic approach. I start and end each session with meditation, encouraging people to relax, centre themselves, take in their surroundings and look at the sky.

Exercise has always been a release for me. I have personal experience of using exercise to create a better and healthier life and to feel better about myself, so my aim with Freely Given is to reach out to people who need it most, many of whom are disadvantaged.

How have you gone about this?

I've reached out to GP surgeries offering to work with people as part of the social

prescribing scheme. Because many of the people who could benefit the most from personal training can't afford the service, I work on a donation-based system, so people pay what they can afford via an honesty box or an internet link.

A donation system sounds laudable, how does it work out?

I find it works really well. I was inspired by a donation-based meditation retreat I attended, and by the community waste food cafés using the same model.

I encourage people to pay what they can afford – so if money isn't a problem to give generously in order to let me work more cheaply with those who wouldn't usually be able to afford PT.

I was very keen to be able to reach out to people who need personal training and not to exclude those who could most benefit from the service.

A donation based system creates a non-discriminatory environment and empowers people to give what they think the service is worth. This challenges me to keep service levels high. I don't live a lavish lifestyle – that's not what I aspire to.

My business costs are low and I go to cool and exciting places – both outdoors and people's homes. Working this way ▶



Brooks-Thornett works with clients using a donation system for payments

- feels exciting and creative and allows me to show my values and attitudes.

Plus, I believe the current economic system is outdated: continuous growth in a finite climate is a farce. I'd rather grow the business for the benefit of people, not money. I like trusting people's natural trait to want to give and be generous.

You have to have faith and give people the opportunity to show their nice side.

What has been your experience of finding clients?

In Cornwall, it's easy to find people from marginalised backgrounds – through GP surgeries, food banks, clothing banks. It's much harder to find affluent people, so far they have come through networking and word of mouth.

Is money the main barrier for low income clients?

Money is a big issue, but sometimes people just don't know how to get started – where to go or what to do – and need support with their confidence.

Many of my clients are intimidated by gyms and think they'll be unfriendly environments full of fit, good looking people. I think operators could help to overcome this by offering a buddy

system: inviting, or incentivising experienced members to accompany newbies on their first few visits.

What are your ambitions?

My dream is to be able to continue my work and have a positive impact on

as many people as possible. I'm also looking for external sources of funding to help me do this and have applied to the National Lottery and also to the Tudor Trust. I hope I can find a source of support which will enable me to extend my work to other vulnerable groups. ●





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LESMILLS

Xponential enters Singapore with Club Pilates franchise deal

Xponential Fitness has signed a master franchise deal for its Club Pilates brand in Singapore, signalling the company's expansion into the Southeast Asia wellness market.



We continue to see international expansion as a growth opportunity

John Kersh

The deal – which will see 15 Club Pilates studios opening in the city-state – is a collaboration between Xponential Fitness and Idea Link, a company owned and operated by Naoki Shimabukuro and Akira Onoue, the owners of Club Pilates Japan. Singapore's first Club Pilates site is expected to open in late 2020.

"With the rapid growth of the fitness market in Singapore, we believe that Club Pilates will be an excellent and strategic fit for our business," said John Kersh, chief international development officer for Xponential Fitness.

"We continue to see international expansion as



The first Club Pilates site is expected to open in late 2020

a growth opportunity for us and we are excited to partner again with Naoki and Akira to introduce Xponential Fitness to another new market – and to bring the Club Pilates brand to this burgeoning fitness community."

Xponential has recently inked deals to enter the German, Austrian, Saudi Arabian and South Korean markets with Club Pilates, which it acquired in 2015.

More: http://lei.sr/x8U4z_H

Fitness First Middle East reveals plans to launch a low-cost brand



We've looked at the budget sector for a number of years

George Flooks



The group said it will reveal more details in the coming weeks

Fitness First Middle East is to launch an entirely new budget chain for the region.

Speaking to local media, chief executive George Flooks said the company had looked at the budget sector "for a

number of years".

He added that the new, as-yet-unnamed brand would make its debut later this year.

A spokesperson for Fitness

First Middle East told *HCM* the company would be revealing more details on the budget chain "in the coming weeks".

The news of the new

concept came just days after the group announced it was planning for a "radical new direction" with a range of next-generation club concepts for the market.

According to Flooks, the chain will open 10 new clubs – eight in the UAE and two in Bahrain – which look to cater to a "growing demand for holistic fitness solutions" across the region. The new clubs will feature a host of pioneering exercise and club concepts for the region – including dynamic boxing classes; cubed and wall-less workout studios.

More: http://lei.sr/A9n3K_H

Female-only kickboxing brand plans 50 new sites in 2020

Women-only kickboxing franchise 30 Minute Hit

plans to open 50 new sites internationally during 2020.

The brand has revealed that its global growth plans will see it enter the UK and Australian fitness markets.

Launched in 2004, the fitness brand – which offers HIIT sessions and kickboxing training – currently has 70 locations, mainly in Canada and the US. The company also plans to target the lucrative New York City market during 2020, with the opening of the largest-ever 30 Minute Hit studio in Brooklyn.



Looking back on 2019, it's incredible to see all the milestones we have reached

Jackson Loychuk

The expansion plans follow a record-breaking 2019 for the chain, during which it opened eight new locations in the US and signed an additional 14 development



The brand looks to grow in the US, as well as internationally

agreements. These included areas it had no presence in, such as Las Vegas, Seattle, Austin, and California.

"Looking back on 2019, it's incredible to see all the advances and milestones our brand has reached," said Jackson Loychuk, co-founder.

"This has been the busiest year in our company's history.

"Our brand has seen the most growth in the US since its founding. We've also signed locations internationally in Saudi Arabia and Ireland.

"We're thrilled to continue to spread our message of empowerment as we work to positively impact women."

More: http://lei.sr/t2P8C_H

David Minton launches global data platform with Verdere

Vedere Ventures has announced that it is investing in new global fitness data platform fitNdata.



Little is known about the number of fitness properties worldwide

David Minton

fitNdata will be launched by David Minton, founding director of The Leisure Database Company. It will combine real-time supply data with consumer fitness data to offer a series of services enabling solutions and insights for global clients.

Minton says little is currently known about the number of fitness properties worldwide and fitNdata will create a "new fitness data platform" to spot trends and answer questions that will inform business planning.

More: http://lei.sr/X6c6N_H



fitNdata will track consumer and facility big data

Hussle gets into the corporate fitness business

Fitness marketplace Hussle has launched a corporate fitness service, providing employees with subsidised, multi-club access to UK gyms and health clubs.

The new service will run parallel to Hussle's core consumer offer and has already secured a number of leading brands and organisations – including Facebook UK, Channel 4 and the British Transport Police.

Hussle says it now has a presence in 96 per cent of all UK postcodes and the new corporate offering will leverage this geographic coverage to "appeal to employers with staff that work in different locations or travel frequently".

The service is also designed to run alongside incumbent corporate gym membership packages. Corporate clients are given access to a bespoke website landing page, where



The corporate service will run parallel to Hussle's core offer



The new service has been designed to run alongside incumbent corporate gym membership packages

their employees choose from a selection of four employer-subsidised packages.

Once they select a package, employees are given unlimited monthly access. More: <http://lei.sr/w9J8F.H>

House of Wisdom wellness space to open in London

A self-help studio marketing itself as a "first-of-its-kind self-development wellness space" will open in the heart of London in March 2020.

The House of Wisdom (HOW) will focus on

empowering the mind and body through talks and workshops, while the 2,500sq ft space will provide a "multi-sensorial sanctuary".

Classes are offered in a range of disciplines – from

movement (including three types of yoga, tai chi and capoeira) to mindfulness, breathing and relaxation.

HOW was founded by five entrepreneurs – Luca Maggiora, Cristina Garces,



The concept was born out of a collective dedication
Luca Maggiora

Stephanie Reynolds, Giacomo Favero and Federica Ferro.

"We were on separate journeys of self-discovery, when we converged and decided we wanted to share what we had learned," said co-founder Luca Maggiora.

"The concept was born out of our collective dedication towards creating a space for people to develop and grow."

More: <http://lei.sr/F7T3h.H>



HOW is located in the heart of London and will provide a "multi-sensorial wellness sanctuary"

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Boutique brand BXR London to open at Battersea Power Station

Boutique boxing gym brand BXR London has revealed plans to open its second site at Battersea Power Station.

Set to open in 2021, the 14,000sq ft site will be BXR's largest site to date and will form part of Battersea Power Station's second phase of redevelopment.

As well as the BXR members-only club, the brand will open three Sweat by BXR pay-to-train studios at the Battersea

location. The Versaclimber-based Cardio Studio will offer a low-impact workout, while the Strength & Conditioning studio offers classes designed to improve strength, mobility, conditioning and endurance. Completing the trio, the Skills studio aims to teach and develop boxing technique during high-intensity classes.

BXR was founded in 2017 by entrepreneur Ollia Sardarova and counts boxing champion Anthony Joshua as a backer.



Anthony Joshua (left) is among the backers of the BXR brand

"We're thrilled to be opening at Battersea Power Station," Sardarova said.

"For me, it is one of London's most iconic redevelopment projects."

BXR Battersea will be located in the Grade II Power Station's Turbine Hall B, which was completed in the 1950s.

More: http://lei.sr/z9z6Q_H

Flywheel to shut down at-home service after settling Peloton lawsuit

Indoor cycling brand Flywheel is to discontinue its Flywheel At Home subscription service after settling a legal case with rival Peloton.

A 2018 lawsuit by Peloton alleged that Flywheel had copied aspects of Peloton's technology to stream classes and track riders' performances.

In a statement filed at the United States District Court in Texas – and dated 3 February 2020 – Jeffery Naumowitz, Flywheel's chief financial officer, admitted that Peloton's complaint was "valid".

"Flywheel admits that Flywheel's Fly Anywhere

Bike and associated services infringe the Peloton Patents as alleged by Peloton...and that Flywheel copied elements of the Peloton bike in developing its Fly Anywhere Bike.

"As part of the settlement resolving this dispute, Flywheel agrees that within 60 days it

will stop infringing Peloton's patented technology."

In a separate statement, Flywheel said it would shut down its Flywheel At Home service on 27 March.

Following the news, Peloton has said that Flywheel owners will be able to get a free,

refurbished Peloton if they trade in their old Flywheel by the same date.

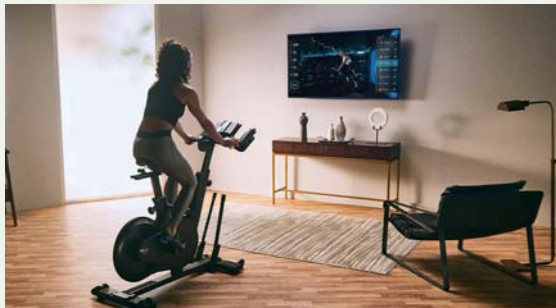
Flywheel was launched in 2010 and offers cycling-based HIIT classes, in which riders compete against each other.

More: http://lei.sr/M5s3T_H



Flywheel now admits that the Peloton Patents are valid and enforceable

Flywheel statement



Following the settlement, Flywheel said it will discontinue its at-home service on 27 March

Four in five disabled people want to be more physically active

Four in five (81 per cent) disabled people want to be more physically active – but are unable to, as the demand for their needs is not being met by operators.

The figure comes from the latest *Annual Disability and Activity Survey*, published by the Activity Alliance, which offers an in-depth comparison of disabled and non-disabled adults' experiences of sport and physical activity.

Less than half (40 per cent) of disabled people feel they are given the opportunities they need to be active, compared to 71 per cent of non-disabled people. Meanwhile, less than a third (32 per cent) of disabled

people agree that sport is for someone like them – compared to 63 per cent of non-disabled.

The revelations come after figures from Sport England revealed that disabled people



We want fairness for disabled people in sport and physical activity

Barry Horne



A third of disabled people agree sport is for 'someone like them'

are twice as likely to be inactive as those without impairments.

"We want fairness for disabled people in sport and activity and a position where disabled people are as active

as non-disabled people," said Barry Horne, Activity Alliance CEO. "These findings provide robust insight to us."

More: http://lei.sr/S6C3c_H

ukactive reveals new reports under Business Intelligence service

ukactive has launched two major new reports as part of its Business Intelligence service.

The first product is a new series of quarterly business reports entitled *Moving Communities*, which will provide new intelligence to the sector on a more regular basis.

Building on the success of ukactive's annual *Moving Communities* report – which tracks physical activity trends over the past three years – the new reports will offer closer monitoring to identify leisure trends, based on millions of visits held by DataHub.

The new reports include one on the effect of aggregators

The quarterly reports will be available exclusively to ukactive members from April 2020, offering more regular tracking of sector-wide trends over the course of the year.

The second report will be based on an independent assessment of the impact of fitness aggregators.

Funded by Sport England and conducted by the ukactive Research Institute, the research will examine in detail the effect of the growing aggregator market, such as whether there is a significant increase in new people being physically active through the growth in aggregator memberships.

"These new reports come in direct response to feedback

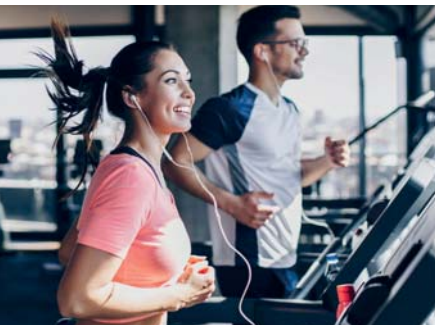


The new reports come in response to feedback from our members

Huw Edwards

received from the ukactive Membership Survey, with our members showing a clear appetite for better reporting of sector performance and trends," said Huw Edwards, ukactive chief executive.

More: http://lei.sr/f3j8D_H



Leisure trust partners with NHS to get the long-term ill more active

Not-for profit leisure operator Circadian Trust is partnering with NHS GP surgeries in Gloucestershire to launch a local initiative which helps and supports people with medical or long-term conditions to become more physically active.

The Healthy Lifestyle Referral Scheme has been developed for adults who are living with, or at risk of developing, a medical

condition and qualify as physically inactive.

The partnership will see five Active Lifestyle Centres – operated by Circadian Trust – work with South Gloucestershire Council and local GP surgeries to provide individuals with a health and wellbeing consultation and on-going support.

Each individual will be assessed and put on a 12-week exercise scheme.



We want to remove the barriers preventing people from exercising

Jim Rollo



The scheme has been developed for adults with illnesses

“What makes our referral scheme unique is our commitment to removing the barriers that might prevent people with long-term illnesses from getting

involved in physical activity,” said Jim Rollo, Healthy Lifestyle Referral Scheme manager at Circadian Trust.

More: http://lei.sr/m6y8j_H

Barry's rides into indoor cycling market with launch of new concept

Boutique fitness operator

Barry's is trialling the indoor cycling market with Barry's Ride – a new concept which was launched in the US during February 2020.

The two first Barry's Ride studios were located in

New York and Los Angeles, California, within or adjacent to existing Barry's studios.

Described as a “lower impact Barry's experience”, the new concept was first introduced as a pop-up experience, with the indoor

cycling schedules being run separately from traditional exercise classes in the iconic Barry's Red Rooms.

The 50-minute Ride classes offered at the pop-up studios gave riders the chance to take part in HIIT-style indoor cycling, paired with traditional Barry's floor work.

“Just imagine replacing the treadmill with a bike and you've got the picture,” a spokesperson for Barry's said.

Barry's – formerly Barry's Bootcamp – was launched in 1998 and was one of the first “boutique” fitness brands.

It is majority-owned by private equity firm North Castle Partners. In October 2019, US financial service

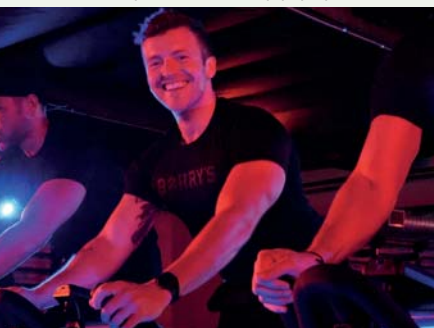


Just imagine replacing the treadmill with a bike and you've got the picture
Barry's

Bloomberg suggested that the company was looking to sell Barry's valuing the business at around US\$700m. Ride follows the launch of recovery-focused “Release” in 2018, and “Lift” in 2019, a programme designed to improve body composition and build muscle mass.

More: http://lei.sr/z9QZz_H

The concept made its debut as a pop-up experience



Could high-tempo music make gym visits more beneficial?

A study has suggested that listening to high-tempo music could increase the benefits of exercise – and reduce the perceived effort involved.

Research, published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, looked into the effects of the tempo of a piece of music on female volunteers.

The team studied a group of volunteers who performed either regular endurance exercises (walking on a treadmill) or high-intensity exercises (using a leg press).

The volunteers completed exercise sessions in silence or while listening to pop music at different tempos.

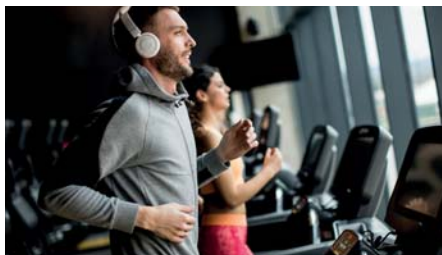
The researchers recorded a variety of parameters, including the volunteers' opinions about their effort levels and their actual heart rate while exercising.

"We found that listening to high-tempo music while exercising resulted in the highest heart rate and lowest perceived exertion compared with not listening to music," said professor Luca P. Ardigo of the University of Verona.



Listening to high-tempo music resulted in a higher heart rate

Luca P. Ardigo



The study concluded that music can have a positive effect

"This means that the exercise seemed like less effort, but it was more beneficial in terms of enhancing physical fitness. Following these results, we

would also like to study the effects of other music features – such as genre, melody, or lyrics – in the future."

Aerobic exercise could help prevent onset of Alzheimer's

Regular aerobic exercise could decrease the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease in adults who are at higher risk of generating the illness.

A study by a team at the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC),

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, looked at the effects of exercise over a period of six months on individuals at risk of developing Alzheimer's.

The study investigated cognitively normal, older

adults with a family history or genetic risk for Alzheimer's.

Half of the participants did not take part in organised exercise sessions, while the other half participated in a moderate-intensity treadmill training programme three times per week for 26 weeks.

Those on the active training programme improved their fitness, spent less time sedentary and performed better on cognitive tests.

The improved cardiorespiratory fitness was associated with increased brain glucose metabolism in the posterior cingulate cortex, an area of the brain linked to Alzheimer's Disease.

"This is a step towards developing an exercise



This is a step towards an exercise prescription to protect against Alzheimer's

Ozioma Okonkwo

prescription that protects the brain against Alzheimer's," said Ozioma C. Okonkwo, lead investigator at ADRC.

More: http://lei.sr/A4d4z_H





Earlam has led the David Lloyd Leisure business since 2015

*“I see potential for another 30 or so
David Lloyd Clubs in the UK”*

GLENN EARLAM

New models, standalone boutiques and growing the estate through acquisition. The CEO of David Lloyd Leisure talks to Kate Cracknell

W

hen HCM last interviewed David Lloyd Leisure CEO, Glenn Earlam, towards the end of 2016, he was fairly new to the post, having joined the company in 2015.

At that stage, David Lloyd was about to open its 83rd UK club and ran 11, soon to be 12, clubs in Europe. All operated within a broadly similar large format, full-service model.

But things have moved on rapidly for the company, with a series of exciting new initiatives over recent years – not least the launch of the Blaze boutique model and the introduction of a more extensive, premium spa offering.

Here, Earlam offers an insight into the new formats being developed and an overview of estate growth, including hot-off-the-press details of two new European acquisitions. ►



DLL's Blaze boutique concept has been designed to appeal to millennials

What's been happening since you last spoke to HCM?

Between 2015 and 2019, we more than doubled our EBITDA. We've also grown our membership numbers by around 43 per cent, from 439,000 members in 2015 to 629,000 members as at December 2019. Some of that has been organic growth and some of it new business.

Probably a little more than 50 per cent is down to new businesses: from 2015 to end of 2019, we grew from 90 clubs to 116, of which 100 are in the UK. However, a good chunk of it is down to enhanced profitability in the existing estate. We've listened carefully to our members and invested heavily – around £125m over the last four years – and we've grown volume and yield as a result.

The two sides of the coin are very interrelated: if the core business grows well, that gives us more opportunity to go and buy other businesses. Our owner, TDR, has confidence we're doing the right thing, but also, in simple terms, we have more cash to make those acquisitions. So the foundation of the success we've enjoyed is the existing business.

Tell us more about the £125m investment in your existing clubs.

Whenever a club has been due a refurbishment, we haven't only replaced the product. We've also added quite a lot in the way of new product.



We've spent about £17m on Blaze, for example, our in-house HIIT boutique concept (see HCM Nov/Dec 18, p80).

We've also spent around £20m on five luxury Spa Retreats – at Farnham, Purley, Royal Berkshire, Chigwell and Cambridge – with the first having opened in spring 2019. We now plan to invest a further £40-45m to roll this spa offering across the rest of our top 20 clubs.

These spas cost around £3m each, which is a significant capital investment, given we can build a new David Lloyd

Club for somewhere in the order of £12m. But they're really worthy of their 'luxury' descriptor. I would put them up against any of the best spas in the finest five-star hotels in the country.

Do the spas offer wellness options?

Not within the spas as things stand, but we're testing a broader wellness proposition in our luxury spa clubs.

Test is absolutely the right word – we're not definitive about what's working and what's not working at this



The new Bristol club
is a template for a
next generation of
DLL clubs



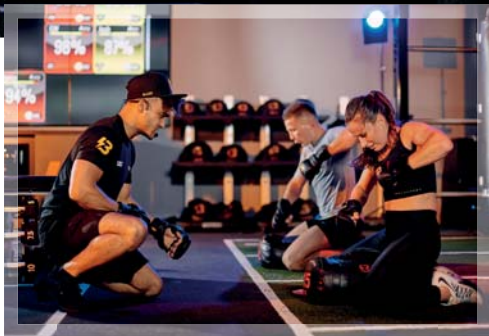
**DLL invested £17m
developing the Blaze
boutique concept**

► stage – but we're exploring the extent to which members are interested in a wide range of wellness options: talks on nutrition or sleep; access to information online; meditation classes; a very different approach to yoga, which we've already trialled in a few clubs in collaboration with SARVA yoga.

In some clubs, we've started trialling classes where you put on headphones and take part in sound wave meditation on an individual basis. It's excellent – far better than my ability to describe it!

We don't know all the answers yet. What we do know is, in these top-end clubs where we have a more extensive spa and charge a premium, we want to provide a broader wellness offering. We just need to test the extent to which that's of interest to our members.

We're pleased with the response so far and I suspect we'll do more of this in the future. We just have to take it one step at a time, because some of this is quite expensive to deliver; we need to work



out what's most valued by our members, and most effective for their wellbeing.

What's your potential in the UK?

There are more opportunities in the UK than we previously thought. We have no clubs in Sheffield, for example, the fifth

largest city. We have one club in Leeds. Yet we have five in and around Glasgow.

If Glasgow can support five clubs, why shouldn't we have three in Leeds, three in Sheffield? That's a simplistic way of putting it, but we've found cannibalisation between clubs in a city has been minimal. ►


**THERE ARE MORE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UK THAN WE
THOUGHT – IF GLASGOW CAN SUPPORT FIVE CLUBS, WHY
SHOULDN'T WE HAVE THREE IN LEEDS AND SHEFFIELD?**

David Lloyd

CLUBS



Earlam is growing the DLL portfolio and the range of services on offer, from wellness to boutique



New spas will be comparable to those offered by luxury hotels

- We're also beginning to experiment with different sized clubs – we now have a slightly bigger model, a standard-sized model, and we're working on a slightly smaller model – which will give us the opportunity to go into different markets.

It's not dissimilar to what the likes of PureGym and The Gym Group are doing at the budget end of the market.

The larger model, following on from the early success of our luxury spas, will have a luxury spa included from the start. That's the main difference in this model.

It will also have Blaze as standard, so there will be four group exercise locations rather than the usual three, and generally the club will be of a higher spec.

The standard size is pretty much what we've operated thus far, albeit with refinements. We've just opened a club in Bristol that's the blueprint for our standard model, with local photography, art on the walls and slightly more luxurious changing rooms and clubrooms.

While most of the product is similar, we've moved the model on to position ourselves as a more luxurious brand.

And then the smaller version – we haven't opened one yet, but we've been playing around with a model that would involve a luxurious spa, a smaller gym and very strong, cutting-edge group exercise spaces, as well as a smaller kids' area. This would be the model where the demographic is strong but the population isn't large enough to support a bigger club.

I believe a combination of these two factors – that we can have multiple clubs



DLL is experimenting with different sized clubs, some with smaller gyms and kids' areas


that are quite close to each other, as well as introducing new formats that open up new markets – spells out a lot more opportunity in the UK. I see potential for another 30 or so David Lloyd Clubs in the UK, and that's before we even start on standalone Blaze studios.

You're planning standalone studios?

Blaze has grown group exercise penetration for us in our clubs, which

is something we pretty obsessively try to achieve because we know it drives retention. Blaze has also driven a higher take-up of our Platinum membership because new members have to be Platinum to access these classes.

Blaze has been our biggest capital investment in terms of group exercise, and it's been very successful. So, we started asking ourselves whether Blaze could work as a standalone boutique.



DLL creates its own custom designed workouts

I DON'T SEE ANY REASON WHY WE COULDN'T DOUBLE THE SIZE OF OUR EUROPEAN PORTFOLIO OF DAVID LLOYD CLUBS OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

The economics of boutiques are challenging. Not impossible – there are some great boutiques out there – but it's certainly challenging. When I look at what's paid in rent, particularly in London, and then at the turnover some boutiques achieve, half of their income is going to the landlord, then they need to cover their own operating costs.

They need to be three-quarters full just to cover all that, and only then – in the last quarter of the year – they might actually make some money.

We, therefore, wanted to come at it from a slightly different angle. And that slightly different angle was: how would a standalone Blaze boutique dovetail with the existing David Lloyd estate?

It's certainly not by accident that our first Blaze studio – which fully opened at the beginning of January this year – is in the centre of Birmingham, which has another six David Lloyd clubs.

If this studio is a success, we think that success will be borne out of three different dynamics, the first being people who buy either a single class or a multi-class pack of standalone Blaze

sessions. That's category one, and these individuals will pay £19 for a single session or £79 for a five-class pack.

Category two are the existing David Lloyd members, who are able to use Blaze in the city centre of Birmingham for free provided they're Platinum members.

Over time, that will drive even more Platinum membership and with it better yields – plus if you have more usage, you have lower attrition as well.

And then the third category in a way ties the first two categories together. It's the people who start off just using Blaze in the city centre, near their office, but who then realise they live near a David Lloyd Club and who decide to join – because if they go to the Blaze twice a week, they might as well join their local David Lloyd and be able to use the spa, the pool and chill out there at weekends.

And that's how we think we can potentially unblock what's generally a challenging economic model for boutiques.

If it works, we might roll out more Blaze studios, but we're not committing to doing this until we see how this first one goes and we can analyse the results.

What new for DLL internationally?

We've completed the acquisition of Hamburg Meridian Group, which operates five clubs in Hamburg, plus clubs in Berlin, Kiel and Frankfurt. We've also bought a single site – Country Club Geneva.

The Meridian Group is a strong and well-respected name in the German health and fitness industry and a key strategic acquisition for us. We have ambitious plans to further invest in and develop the clubs, as well as looking for further opportunities to expand the David Lloyd concept across Germany.

Country Club Geneva is a premium wellness facility on the outskirts of the Swiss city that's currently owned by Dona Bertarelli. The deal makes the club the 124th in DLL's European portfolio.

We now have 24 overseas clubs: nine in Germany, seven in the Netherlands, two in Belgium, two in Spain, one on the French/Swiss border, one in Switzerland, one in Italy and one in Ireland.

We also have a club in India, which we launched in mid-2019 in partnership with local operator, Talwalkars (see *HCM* August 2019, p58). The product looks



The company plans to trial the rollout of Blaze as a standalone concept

- absolutely superb, with a lot more emphasis on the social aspect, including the food and beverage. The rooftop restaurant is huge and fabulous. It's almost a social club first and a health and fitness club second. However, we have fewer members than we anticipated so far, and India is certainly not an easy place for a company like David Lloyd to do business. We're yet to make a decision on our future plans for that market.

And your European growth plans?

We're aiming to open four clubs a year in Europe, which for the most part will be created through acquisition.

Alongside the recent Meridian deal, we're working on a few single-site acquisitions. Most deals tend to be single-site, which is why we're setting a realistic goal of four new clubs a year.

Even where we opt for a new-build, we'll generally buy an old tennis club or similar – something that, in planning terms, has already been zoned for sporting activities. It makes the whole process quicker and simpler: a one-year planning process, rather than the three years it would take if we needed to change the zoning for a new-build.

We then either knock it down and rebuild it, or else build a full David Lloyd Club around the existing facilities.

Which European countries have the most potential for growth?

In terms of the markets we want to focus on, Germany is very interesting for us. It's the biggest, most affluent country in Europe, with a well-established health



and fitness industry and a high demand for premium spa and fitness clubs.

We believe our breadth of offering, and our premium family focus, is as relevant there as it is in the UK – yet we have 100 clubs in the UK and just one in Germany. So, we think Germany represents a great opportunity.

We're also definitely interested in developing more clubs in Spain: we already do well in Barcelona and Madrid.

Although it's a small market, we'd also be interested in the Netherlands, if the opportunity were to arise.

In Italy, everyone's starting point is Milan and we're no different, but our longer-term growth plans for that market reach

across several parts of northern Italy.

Our focus will be on the markets where we already have a presence, with a strategy that's focused on cities rather than countries. You have to be pragmatic.

It's a lot easier to open a second, third, fourth club within a city than it is to operate a network of clubs spread widely across a country, not only for brand awareness but also for culture, logistics and staffing – the ability to get staff who already know the business to take their expertise and spearhead new openings.

Even with that city-based approach, though, I don't see any reason why we couldn't double the size of our European portfolio over the next four years. ●



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Are we catering for INTROVERTS?

Is the health and fitness industry more geared up to meet the needs of extroverts and overlooking more introverted customers? Kath Hudson investigates

In a world set up to reward extrovert behaviour, introverts are commonly misunderstood and judged – labelled as shy, lacking in confidence or even boring. Even the dictionary definition is reductive and fails to appreciate the many nuances of the introvert personality.

The scientific difference between introverts and extroverts is how they respond to the neurotransmitter dopamine: a chemical released in the brain that provides the motivation to seek external rewards.

Dopamine makes everyone more talkative, alert to their surroundings and motivated to take risks. Extroverts enjoy this feeling, even crave it, but it makes introverts feel overstimulated, so after a dopamine rush they need to withdraw to recharge their batteries.

Introverts thrive on a different neurotransmitter, acetylcholine, which allows for deep thought and reflection. In short it means that introverts can act like extroverts – and even be mistaken for them – but doing this drains their batteries and then they'll need to withdraw. Put simply, extroverts recharge with people and introverts recharge on their own.

The world has been set up to be pleasing to extroverts, so let's make sure that health clubs lead the way by offering inclusive, welcoming environments that introverts will want to visit, before we lose this group of members to digital streaming services.

So how can you make your club more appealing to introverts? We ask the experts.

Jacque Crockford

**American Council on Exercise:
exercise physiology content manager**

It's the instructors' role to meet participants where they are on that day. Instructors should check in with each participant, individually before class if time allows, and address the class as a whole with inclusive, motivating language. Instructors, and the industry, should celebrate personality differences and strive to be as inclusive as possible. Inclusive language in marketing material is one way the industry may be able to drive participation by introverts.

Generally, group exercise participants return to classes because of the

instructor. If the instructor can meet each participant where they are in their exercise journey and mood that day, they will be successful with introverts.

This means giving clear instructions and modifications to the whole group and creating an inclusive, fun and encouraging environment that engages everyone.

Instructors, and the industry, should celebrate personality differences and strive to be as inclusive as possible



Clubs should offer a variety of different classes and instructors, to appeal to different personality types

Dan Maroun

Les Mills US: assessor, presenter, trainer

One of the biggest things I'd love for people to understand is that introversion and extroversion do play a role in what we enjoy, or what we find fun in life, and so creating awareness of this topic is very important.

Because they have higher thresholds of stimulation, extroverts lean towards exercise, with constantly shifting movements and high-paced programming.

Combine this with social factors of team-training, small-group, or group fitness and you have a recipe for success for those who self-identify as extroverts.

Although we have to be careful not to generalise too much, the opposite can be said for introverts. Over-stimulation is going to turn them off. They prefer workouts where they know what's coming or can anticipate shifts.

They prefer longer sets of a movement and some argue they enjoy the melodic

and pace-oriented setting of a group class set to music, which moves with the beat.

It's hypothesised that the rhythm of the music gives them control in the workout in terms of tempos.

In a group exercise setting, we can appeal to extroverts through higher intensity and variability, combine that with high-paced music and possibly programming which prefers various pyramids, ladders and AMRAPs.

Introverts, on the other hand, are going to feel more secure working out in a group fitness setting where the stimulation factors are controlled and where the workout is somewhat isolated, even, independent and non-competitive.

To appeal to both groups, each day you should include a variety of classes which maximise the combination of formats and instructors across the board, with a welcoming, inclusive, and fun atmosphere which makes people want to be there.



Introversion and extroversion do play a role in what we enjoy, or what we find fun in life, and so creating awareness of this topic is very important ▶



Removing the need for small talk at the gym can make introverts feel more comfortable

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK / HRYSHCHENKO

► Joanna Rawbone

Flourishing Introverts: founder

Introverts will pick their time to visit the gym – when it's not so busy, or when their 'type' of people visit.

As they typically don't enjoy making small talk, removing the points where they might usually be obliged to make conversation can be a relief.

Although social and open introverts might be happy to engage with a member of staff at reception, classic introverts prefer to walk in with headphones on and go straight to their preferred place in the studio.

Online booking and payment, and opening the studio ten minutes early facilitates this. It means they can take their space and get into their own zone, rather than having to queue among chattering groups in the corridor. If I'm going to a class, I like to sit with my headphones on and do a quiet meditation beforehand.

Subdued lighting, rather than harsh lighting, is appropriate, as it allows introverts to be private. But a


dark studio with neon lights can be overwhelming and over stimulating. Natural lighting is good.

Although home fitness offers a draw to introverts, there are many reasons they will want to visit the gym and take part in a group exercise class – for example to learn from a passionate and knowledgeable instructor or take part in a challenging workout. Silent disco concepts can be effective, as they allow introverts to be part of an uplifting group activity, while the headphones assure them of their own space.

Introverts will be drawn to instructors with a calmer manner, possibly the type of people who may have been previously overlooked by employers, or who thought they wouldn't be suitable to lead a group fitness class. Positive language should also be used when describing this type of class – avoiding the term introvert, which still has negative connotations – instead using positive words like quiet or calm.



Subdued lighting, rather than harsh lighting, is appropriate, as it allows introverts to be private. But a dark studio with neon lights can be overwhelming and over stimulating



Calm colours and natural light may suit introverts better than nightclub-inspired interiors

Frances Mikuriya

Body Machine: owner

This is a fascinating subject and I think it's important that the industry starts to acknowledge that not everyone is the same and not everyone wants loud.

As an architect, I believe it's possible to design spaces that can accommodate any personality and make people feel good.

There's been a tendency in the industry to create nightclubby spaces in the belief that loud music and neon lighting are the only way to create an immersive environment. Many people actually find this a distraction from the workout. It's better to make the experience immersive through a well designed and structured class, with an attentive instructor.

My architecture partner, Jorgen Tandberg, and I spent a long time looking for a site that benefitted from natural light, and we designed my club differently from the industry standard, using a light palette of colours that make people feel calm and relaxed. Many people spend all

day indoors, with little natural light, and it's important for circadian rhythms and stress release to come into contact with it. Studies also prove that working out with natural light is beneficial.

I believe many introverts enjoy group fitness, especially concepts involving equipment which then allows them to inhabit their own space, and especially if rooms aren't overcrowded. However, the trend towards broadcasting data on a big screen at the front of the class may also introduce an element of competition which introverts don't welcome.

The role of the instructor is key and so employing a range of personality types is important, so everyone can find an instructor they can relate to.

Shouting, singing and high fiving will not suit everyone. And of course it goes without saying that the instructor should be discreet when speaking to people about any conditions or injuries privately. ●



Shouting, singing and high fiving will not suit everyone. It goes without saying that instructors should be discreet when speaking about personal things

First for fitness solutions

Consumers are seeking varied, effective workouts. It's time to take a new approach to designing fitness areas, as Physical Company's James Anderson explains

What are the trends shaping fitness and your business in 2020?

The way people are choosing to train has changed dramatically. Exercisers are increasingly seeking activities that give a sense of community and engagement; and deliver a fresh, fun, varied experience; and crucially, give them the results they want.

This is reflected in the ACSM's *Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2020*, which shines the spotlight on activities such as group training, functional training, training with free weights, bodyweight training, HIIT and circuit training.

These are the styles of workout end users are now looking for, both in terms of the results they deliver and the varied, engaging training experiences they provide. They're also the areas in which Physical Company has decades of expertise.

How has this shaped your new mission statement: First For Fitness Solutions?

We believe the growing demand for effective yet social fitness experiences demands a new approach to facility design – where gyms' primary focus has tended to be mapping the layout of



Physical Company's James Anderson says it's time to get more ambitious with fitness area design

cardio and strength stations, operators are now prioritising the spaces that can't be crowbarred in at the end of a design dominated by rows of large equipment – spaces where precedence can be given to group exercise, free weights, functional and small group training.

This brings our expertise into the spotlight. Starting with an empty space is what we do best, working from the ground up to create unique playgrounds where results and fun combine to create an exceptional training experience – workout areas that surprise and delight and make fitness more inspiring.


We specialise in everything today's fitness spaces should be built around and we thrive on working together with our customers to develop areas that bring their vision to life, with their target audiences at the heart of our solutions.

This is why 'First for fitness solutions' is our mission statement – because operators should consider Physical Company as their go-to, their first phone call.

However large or small the fitness space, we're here to ensure it exceeds expectations, harnessing the expertise of our team and our broad portfolio of world-class brands.



Reaxing's neuromuscular training kit enables operators to offer something new



Physical Company
supplies Airex mats and
balance pads to provide
cushioned solutions

What's new in your portfolio

As anyone who's looked through our catalogue will tell you, our product portfolio is extensive, and we're continuing to further develop and enhance our offering.

Physical Company-branded products offer great value and high quality. Products are designed to be robust, reliable and enjoyable to use and we continually develop the collection, refining and redesigning to ensure every item is not only great quality, but also functionally excellent.

New launches include redesigned kettlebells, a premium yoga mat and an enhanced version of the multi-functional **EVO Bench**. We're also expanding our custom-branded offering, giving customers the option to add their logo to personalise equipment.

We're delighted to announce **ZIVA** as the latest brand to be distributed by Physical Company in the UK and Ireland.

ZIVA is a well-respected, global brand that offers strong, functional training products of exceptional quality and detail.

ZIVA complements the other ranges Physical Company has available, as well as offering wall-to-wall training solutions.

The team at Physical Company is often asked for unique products to differentiate a section of the gym floor, or to introduce more variety in training techniques, and **Reaxing®** meets that brief: fascinating, innovative products that allow gyms to offer something genuinely different to their members.

Reaxing's unpredictable, neuromuscular training incorporates reaction, balance and function to challenge exercisers and boost their performance. The products are used by numerous top athletes, including Juventus and AC Milan football clubs, motor racing teams, extreme sports pros...and myself (!)

Physical Company is also very proud to partner with **AIREX®**, a world leader in mats and balance pads, to provide optimum cushioned solutions whatever your training concept, whether that's yoga, Pilates, fitness, physiotherapy or rehabilitation.



**ZIVA is the latest brand
to join the portfolio**

Merrithew™ Pilates reformers are getting a lot of interest at the moment, including from professional sports people who are using Pilates to enhance their performance and protect their bodies from injury.

Ecore™ Athletic products allow us to offer performance flooring that's second-to-none. We're seeing a growing recognition among customers of the vital importance of high-quality flooring to the workout experience – that this is, in fact, as important as the equipment they install – and we're becoming leading experts in this field.

Complementing this, across the board, our approach is always to partner with best-in-class manufacturers, including the likes of suppliers **BOSSU®** and **Hyperwear®** and **Custom Turf**.

How do you approach each new project?

We don't believe in a cookie-cutter approach to gym design. With such a broad range of products, not to mention 30 years' expertise, we work with every client to build a facility that meets their brief, while being focused on results and experience.

As a family-owned company, we believe in delivering a personal touch to every client, and ensure everyone we work with receives seamless, friendly service.

Creating inspiring gym designs, coupled with the ideal equipment choices for the target audience, allows Physical Company to help our clients to provide incredible training experiences which spur their members to love their gym!



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GETTING FIT TOGETHER

A new study by Decathlon looks at the most popular types of physical activity by region and time of year, revealing some interesting insights into the health and fitness industry

Two thirds (66 per cent) of British couples who exercise together say working out with their other half has improved

their relationship, while 21 per cent said working out as a couple made them feel more attracted to their partner, according to a new national study from global sports retailer, Decathlon.

When asked which activities are most popular among those who

train together, swimming (37 per cent), visiting the gym (29 per cent) and running (24 per cent) came on top across the UK as most popular ways to keep fit.

The figures come from a survey of more than 7,600 UK adults.

Other findings from the Decathlon Activity Index include that 22 per cent of couples who are physically active together said they exercise as a couple to stay in better shape, while a similar ►



Going to the gym was
the second most popular
activity choice for couples



21 per cent of those exercising as a couple said being active together made them feel more attracted to their partner

PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK/DAVID M. GRAY

- number (21 per cent) said it reduces their stress levels.

"It's interesting to learn that such a high proportion of Brits are exercising with their partners," commented Joshua Gutteridge, sports manager at Decathlon.

"It's clearly not just the physical benefits that exercising as a couple is having, with a large number saying that working out together is having a positive impact on their relationship – meaning this could be the secret to a happy and healthy life.

"So, if you're struggling to find enough opportunities to spend quality time together, exercise is still a great way to enjoy being with your partner, while also feeling great about yourself in the process."

The Decathlon Activity Index tracks rates of participation in sport and other physical activities across the year through a national survey repeated every month. ●



It's not just the physical benefits of exercise. A large number of people report that working out together has had a positive impact on their relationship

Joshua Gutteridge

To access the full Decathlon Activity Index, go to

HCMmag.com/decathlon



*London was found to be the yoga / pilates capital of the UK, with 19% of residents choosing it as their preferred activity**

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/NEILA

*Fitness/gym is the most popular activity in the uk, with 32% of British adults choosing it as their main exercise**



27% of men in the UK said they exercise **8 times a month**, with **20%** stating they **don't exercise at all***



*24% of men stated cycling as a preferred means of exercise, compared to 19% of women**



Wales was found to be the **least active region in the uk**, with **41%** of residents saying they **do no exercise at all***

*London was found to be the fitness / gym capital of the UK, with 43% of residents choosing it as their preferred activity**



*SOURCE: DECATHLON



EMMA BARRY

The force of nature that is industry catalyst, Emma Barry, has blasted out a book called *Building a Badass Boutique* that went straight to number one on the Amazon International Best Seller list. Liz Terry caught up with her

What inspires you the most in the world of fitness?

Our intent. I love that we're inherently good as an industry, trying our best to bring health and happiness to our communities. That we're a collective movement. We draw a crowd and get to celebrate the joy of our bodies and minds.

What differentiates boutiques from standard gyms?

Focus. Boutiques present one idea (or a small selection of concepts) to one specific market, with one undiluted message, across multiple platforms. Done well, the simple elegance of curating a single, emotive customer journey from touchpoint to touchpoint – engaging well before check-in and extending way beyond the workout – is intoxicating.

Good boutiques are offering the whole package – the community. The hashtag. The T-shirt. The ritual. The retreat.

What are the three main factors needed to create a badass boutique?

The three I observe in undeniable boutique businesses are:

1 Brand – The why?

Comprised of addressing your **purpose**, **pain** and **positioning**. You're placed in the community to meet a need – the feeling, the message, the simply executed concept. A love-mark that raving fans happily wear across their chest, inspiration they weave into conversation and post on the 'gram – like, hourly.

It's no mistake that many successful boutiques have a baller brand strategist sitting at their core. Fitting Room from NYC is a perfect example, where Kari Saitowitz – with an executive pedigree in marketing – offers a phenomenal case study of unpacking her triple threat. Firstly the name – 'Fitting Room' (which stands for functional high intensity training – plus a ►

“

***It's no mistake that
many successful
boutiques have
a baller brand
strategist sitting
at their core***

”



Kari Saitowitz has built the Fitting Room in NYC around key icons

- fitting room is where people go to change). Secondly, the colour green (a unisex shade that symbolises growth), and the scribble kettle-bell logo (a ridiculously effective fat burner presented in a non-intimidating way).

2 Product – The what?

People, programming and place make up the tangible products that draw people to the honeypot of fitness.

Coaches are modern day preachers leading members and spend across a range of lifestyle goods and services. Instructors have become influencers, the 'pied pipers' of fitness, fuelled by reality TV, celebrity clients and social media.

Programming gravitas has burgeoned in boutiques in the wake of CrossFit WODs, formulaic solutions like F45's circuit-based, functional training and Orangetheory's heart rate-based workout protocol.

Add in the many rhythm-based formats spanning the hot trends of barre, cycling, treadmill, HIIT, boxing and yoga hybrids that are enticing new audiences from our world of increasing sedentary over-consumption.

The boutique sector has accelerated experiential fitness by engaging with multi-sensory environments; KOBBOX – 'where fight club meets nightclub', Saints & Stars – where you may just be delightfully surprised, as I was, by perching on a heated seat, or Barry's – where the 'red room of pain' bathes you in sensory stimulation to motivate you to leave it on the floor.

3 Systems – The how?

Process, plan and pace logistically drive how the best boutique health and fitness brands deliver the experience consistently, comprehensively and energetically.

We live in enabled, data-led times – the age of frictionless commerce. We demand seamless online and offline experiences. The best brands "automate the mundane" says Bryan O'Rourke, president of the Fitness Industry Technology Council.

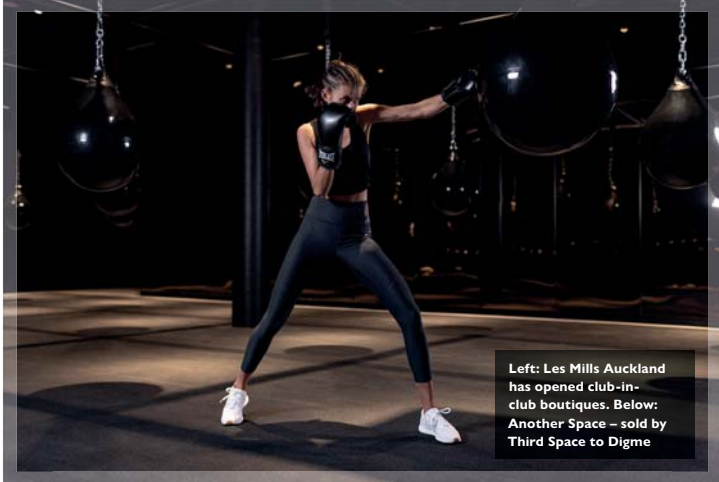
All the things we don't need to see, like booking and payment and waivers, are taken care of invisibly. ►





Above: Saints & Stars surprised Emma Barry when she perched on its heated seats. Left: KOBOK, where 'fight club meets nightclub'. Below: Orangetheory blazed a trail with its heart rate-based workouts





Left: Les Mills Auckland has opened club-in-club boutiques. Below: Another Space – sold by Third Space to Digne

- And then we need systems that support living the culture out loud, by bringing more power to the human moments of connection and camaraderie. Cue the word walls, team and personal challenges and clever marketing nudges.

When looking at economic lifecycle, what's the next stage for boutiques?

"Good will scale. Bad will fail". **Consolidation, collaboration, extension and extinction** lie ahead.

With only 40 per cent of US boutiques making money, as reported by Club Intel in 2019, the sustainability of the current economic model is shaky at best in many places.

Things are also shifting – Third Space opting out of its baby sister boutique, Another Space, for example.

Then there are big-box exemplars, such as Midtown Athletic, Les Mills Auckland, Gymbox and Virgin Active that are integrating boutique sensitivities into their overall membership model on a club-in-club basis.

New boutique club models like Styles Studios Fitness (USA) and House Concepts in Vancouver are hosting several boutique experiences under one roof and putting pressure on single-offer sites as a result.

Consolidation and collaboration will also happen within and between brands, and successful boutiques will scale and refit non-successful sites to grow their portfolios.

Classes will come together, either in physical settings – like club-in-club – or with aggregators. There'll be more multi-site access offerings such as Xponential's X-Pass which umbrellas its eight franchise brands: AKT, StretchLab, CycleBar, Pure Barre, Stride, Row House, YogaSix and Club Pilates.

In short, we're moving fast towards a world of ecosystems.

Extensions will happen within brands – an example is Barry's which is piloting its bike workout 'Ride' alongside its existing treadmill workout, while digital expressions of many brands will start to reach beyond bricks and mortar to capture the growth in at-home and on-demand workouts.

We're at the sharp end of the experience economy, where people now value experience above all.



“
**Fundamentally,
 customers don't want
 choice, they just want
 exactly what they
 want**
 ”

Barry says Midtown Athletic is one of a number of big box brands that are integrating 'boutique sensibilities' into their model

PHOTO: COURTESY OF FYNTONE

I love how Pine and Gilmore capture the complex art of delivering today's preferences in their work on the experience economy, saying "Fundamentally, customers don't want choice, they just want exactly what they want."

Did the book write itself, or was it hard work?

Both. It was lovingly written on planes, trains and in hotel rooms across three continents. I also joined the 5.00am club to write before life happened and pulled a few all-nighters to push on through towards the end.

It was a joy to stop repeating myself over numerous coffee dates and get things down on paper once and for all.

Of course it was tough, but I had a huge support network: a nine-month business accelerator that demanded the book be produced, an accountability group that didn't take no for an answer, 65 people who contributed to the book and expected to see their stories up in lights, the uKactive SWEAT book launch date (made more interesting when it was shifted from March to February meaning I had to self-publish – at pace).

My cheerleading husband sealed the deal by calling me at 3.00am my time – wherever I was – to tell me I was great, to keep going – and to get some sleep.

My gamechanger was my editor, Kate Cracknell, who thankfully said 'yes' to taking on her first book.

Having successfully worked together on previous features, I knew she was the pea to my pod.

Working across different time zones meant we could do lightning fast turnarounds on chapters, and – like my life – the

book was written in transit, edited in London, designed in NYC and promoted from Vancouver.

With the purchasing power of our global fitness whanau, we shot to #1 International Best Seller on Amazon in February 2020. Gotta love tech and these times.

Will you write more and if so, what will they be about?

Yes. I've had a chip on my shoulder since leaving Otago University in New Zealand, with one English paper and a double degree on the table. I expect this feeling of inadequacy will express itself through more published work.

I also learned through the process that writing is not a destination – like Tuscany – but a muscle, like fitness.

And now I've exercised that muscle enough, it's become a habit, so now I'm cursed with leaping out of bed at 5.00am, pen in hand – or rather, MacBook at fingertips.

To be honest, the book I actually set out to write was *100 PUMP Memoirs of an International Master Trainer* – no-holds barred, tongue-in-cheek 'stories from the road' focusing on the early days of Les Mills. But the suits told me to grow up and write something business-like.

I may just go back to remember the bad old days of #gohardorgohome, because I'm a rule breaker at heart. We'll see.

Right now, I'm focused on the workbook to support *Building a Badass Boutique*, for those who can't make the masterclasses but want a deeper dive into the better boutique businesses. ●

Find out more:

www.buildingabadassboutique.com



Dawn Falkner Clark converted her garage into a personal training space, where she specialises in EMS training



BE FIT BE YOU

Reinvigorating personal training

With a longstanding professional career in the fitness industry, we talk to Dawn Falkner Clark to find out more about her background and what the future holds for Be Fit Be You

Since converting her garage space, and starting up her own personal training business – Be Fit Be You – Dawn Falkner Clark has reinvigorated her love of delivering one-to-one training utilising the benefits of Electro Muscle Stimulation (EMS) training.

Falkner Clark's at-home business is thriving, with 30 clients enjoying weekly sessions and seeing irrefutable results.

Tell us about your background in the fitness industry

I've been working in the fitness space since the 1990s and have experienced a variety of roles across swim, gym and group exercise. After working my way up to Fitness Manager, I moved into a more tactical role at The Club Company,

overseeing things such as team training and recruitment, as well as member experience and retention strategies.

My passions have always been focused around helping people achieve their fitness goals, creating behaviour change which will foster positive lifelong habits. I've been lucky enough to have the opportunities to do just that.

What were your initial thoughts about EMS?

I first saw EMS training in action at FIBO in 2018. miha bodytec had a huge stand there and I couldn't help but be intrigued – it was certainly unlike anything I'd ever seen before in the fitness industry.

After speaking with the team and trialling a session, I immediately fell in love with it and saw a huge opportunity

to appeal to an untapped section of the population who struggle to engage with exercise, in particular, strength training.

Despite the copious amounts of in-depth research proving the benefits of strength training, especially for middle aged and older adults, I've often struggled to get people to understand how fundamental it is to their overall health.

Old injuries, niggles and fear of high impact training often put people off. Yet, with EMS, you can incorporate strength training into an individual's fitness regime, without having to worry about any of these factors.

It's perfect for creating muscular adaptations, without requiring any form of weight-bearing activity. The stimulus creates muscle contractions throughout the body, so there's no need to worry



"We're all about appealing to those who don't want to go to a traditional gym, haven't been able to see results from their training or want to try something a little different"

Dawn Faulkner Clark

about clients not engaging the correct areas when they train.

What was it about EMS that inspired you to set up Be Fit Be You?

I've always enjoyed working directly with people to help them get results. Yet, the personal training market is extremely saturated and I knew I wouldn't be able to survive in such a competitive market without my own strong USP.

EMS training has given me that, allowing me the opportunity to do what I love, while knowing I have my own niche from which I can excel.

Be Fit Be You is the result of that. We're all about appealing to those who don't want to go into a traditional gym environment, haven't been able to see results from their training or want to try something a little different.

Within fitness there seems to be a focus on the elite, but most people just want to feel healthier, keep active and lose a little weight. Be Fit Be You is all about providing a service for the masses.

What are the benefits of EMS training and who is your target market?

Saving time is one of the greatest benefits. The 20-minute sessions provide enough time to be effective and hands-on, but aren't too long that clients lose interest or run out of energy.

Equally, as a trainer you're able to fit three times the number of clients into your day and bring in additional revenue through a more efficient schedule. As a mum it has enabled me to find a great work-life balance – I can both work on my business and spend time with my family.

I also love the fact EMS offers so many different results – toning, fat-loss, performance enhancement, etc – meaning that as a trainer you're able to tap into multiple audiences seeking different goals.

There's significant research into its success with back pain management as well and indeed we've been able to

maximise this aspect with many of our clients. We've had people who can barely even walk come in to train with us, and after only a few months' worth of sessions, they're off on skiing holidays or running 10k races.

The science behind the training is indisputable and once people start seeing results, they tell their friends. This has enabled us to grow the business further.

What are your goals for the future with Be Fit Be You?

Of course I'd love to expand. To have my own boutique studio would be amazing. It would give me the opportunity to tap into the mass market and really make a difference to so many people.

As a personal trainer, it's given me the key ingredient to appeal to clients who I otherwise wouldn't have been able to engage with. I truly believe in the potential of EMS for getting more people into exercise and supporting those who have struggled to find a fitness solution to suit their lifestyle. ●

■ For more information on EMS training visit <https://www.miha-bodytec.com/en> or to find out more about Be Fit Be You, visit <https://befit-beyou.com/>

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“If raised voices or certain verbal intonations that signal aggression are detected in the clubs, the smart camera system alerts Basic-Fit’s remote control-operators, allowing them to intervene if necessary”

RENE MOOS

The CEO of Basic-Fit shared insights into the workings of the company at the Virtuagym FitNation conference in Amsterdam. Megan Whitby was there for HCM

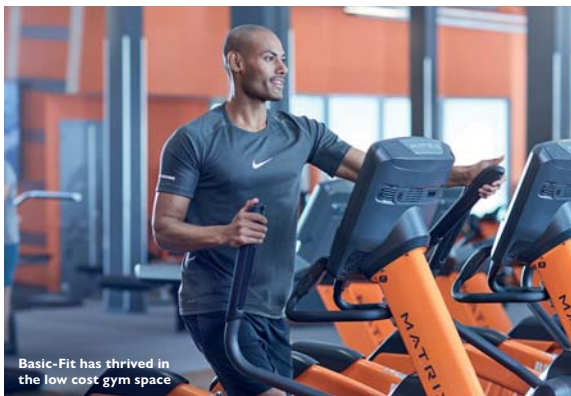
Founded in the Netherlands, budget operator Basic-Fit has more than 750 locations across the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Spain.

The brand has cited ambitions to increase its European club network to reach the 1,250 club mark in 2022.

CEO Rene Moos was a professional tennis player in the 1980s, but didn't reach the top, so became a tennis coach.

He opened his own tennis school which grew into a complex with 24 courts and fitness facilities, before launching the first Total Health Club in Hoofddorp in the Netherlands, however, Moos told delegates at the FitNation conference the club wasn't much more successful than his tennis career had been.

Eventually, he found success, along with his business partner, Eric Wilborts, in the budget fitness market. "I failed as a tennis player, but succeeded as a businessman," he told delegates.



Basic-Fit has thrived in the low cost gym space



“

*“I failed as a
tennis player,
but succeeded
as a businessman”*

Rene Moos



Moos has built one of the biggest gym chains in the world

Rene Moos, photographed at the first Virtuagym FitNation conference in Amsterdam

■ TOP TIPS FROM RENE MOOS

BETTER DONE THAN PERFECT

Release your product and improve it based on feedback

FOCUS YOUR ENERGIES

It's better to be the number one in one market than number three or four in many

MAKE MISTAKES

Don't just think, but do. Try new things

CREATE A STRONG, LOYAL TEAM

They will underpin your business success

CLUSTER

If you want to set up additional gyms, do so in places you're already known

KEEP INNOVATING

Your competitor is no longer just another gym. Big tech is coming

► ABOUT BASIC-FIT

Having witnessed the success of Planet Fitness in using a low-cost approach, he was inspired to follow the same route in building his own business.

"Our brand operates with a low-cost model because, although investment is low, the return is high," Moos said.

The brand recently launched in France and despite concerns it would be a challenging market to enter, Moos described the move as "fairly easy".

"You have to focus your efforts and resources to succeed," he said. "Better a market leader in a few countries than number three or four in many countries.

"Time to market is important and you can always improve with feedback," said Moos. "Better done than perfect!"

IN DEPTH INSIGHTS

Moos gave an in-depth presentation into Basic-Fit's operating structure. He explained how the brand's gyms are remotely managed by centralised teams using smart cameras and intercom systems, because the brand has so few staff at clubs and wants to support them.

This method was initially tested and fine-tuned in three locations and then rolled out across the estate.

Basic-Fit has developed its own remote surveillance tool and control-room to observe in-club activity using

live-feeds that are monitored by sound and vision by an external, off-site team.

This allows the club to control access to clubs as well as keeping tabs on security and tracking members' welfare.

To illustrate how this works in practice, Moos explained that – using specialist software – Basic-Fit's surveillance system also monitors levels of aggression in clubs.

If raised voices or certain verbal intonations that signal aggression are detected, the system alerts Basic-Fit's remote control-operators, allowing them to intervene if necessary, by sending someone to site.

DATA DRIVEN

"We have one staff member per gym and about 20 to 25 smart cameras," Moos explained. "These cameras are monitored 24/7 in our own control room and everything is data-driven, from opening the doors to operating the assistance intercom.

"But of course, this kind of system is not something you can set up easily and it also involves trial and error," he said. "These smart cameras detect, among other things, whether someone has been lying still for more than three minutes, so we can tell if someone has become ill. However, you can guess what happened when Basic-Fit introduced yoga classes... the control room went crazy!"

FUTURE TECH

During his keynote, Moos made predictions about the future relationship between the fitness industry and technology, saying: "The fitness world will see VR really take off in a couple of years, and I believe that we'll soon see Apple and Google enter this industry.

"If this happens, gym operators simply won't have the budgets to be able to compete against such major brands".



Megan Whitby, reporting from the Virtuagym FitNation conference in the Netherlands, for HCM

Read our interview with Tom Moos, son of Rene, in the February issue of HCM magazine



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TIME TO COMBINE

CIMSPA and UK Coaching are combining REPs and the CIMSPA Exercise and Fitness Directory. Tara Dillon, CEO of CIMSPA and Mark Gannon, CEO of UK Coaching, explain what it means for exercise professionals and employers

What's the plan?

Tara

We're very pleased to announce that CIMSPA and UK Coaching have reached an agreement to combine the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) with the CIMSPA Exercise and Fitness Directory, creating a

single directory for all exercise and fitness professionals, which will be hosted and managed by CIMSPA.

Mark

UK Coaching will in turn provide all CIMSPA members with access to its

learning and development platform, which holds a wealth of resources for all those who deliver physical activity and sport.

In order to maintain their professional status, exercise and fitness professionals are required to commit to their own learning and development through CPD and our platform will provide CIMSPA members access to CIMSPA-accredited learning and development.

This agreement enables members to access our system as a one stop shop for CIMSPA-endorsed CPD, together with a whole host of professional career development learning and tools.

How will it work internationally?

Tara

CIMSPA has a partnership with Europe Active and EREPS, which gives CIMSPA membership international portability – allowing our members to work in many countries around the world.

What are the benefits?

Tara

Ultimately, this is about the two organisations working together to create, for the first time, a unified recognition system for the sector, together with a single endorsement mechanism for training providers.

This will help CIMSPA and UK Coaching provide the best possible service to the workforce and will also realise important elements of the Government's 2015 *Sporting Future* strategy and Sport England's 2016-2021 *Towards an Active Nation* strategy.

What will this mean for REPs members?

Mark

Nothing will change immediately and, as it's a requirement of the sector for fitness professionals to maintain their professional status and insurance while being deployed in their job role, all exercise and fitness professionals should continue to register with their respective membership bodies for the time being, while plans are swinging into action.

UK Coaching and CIMSPA are working together to ensure a seamless transition to a single system. We'll be communicating to our respective members over the coming months and will be doing all we can to make this as smooth a transition as possible.

Tara

This is a really exciting opportunity for all of us – simplifying the process around professional recognition and providing a clear pathway for learning and development, along with other benefits.

The big picture is ultimately about elevating the status of the profession; giving employers and customers confidence that anyone who's a CIMSPA member is a trained professional who will deliver a quality service.


REPs members won't notice any immediate change. There'll be a transition of membership.

One of the most important outcomes of the partnership will be the recognition of the new CIMSPA Kitemark for professional status and recognised CPD, which UK Coaching will host.

How will this impact employers?

Tara

We see a big benefit for employers in simplifying and bringing clarity to the system. CIMSPA membership will become the only professional recognition that employers need to look for when engaging new team members.



Tim Hollingsworth, Sport England CEO, (centre with Mark Gannon and Tara Dillon), announced the agreement at the recent CIMSPA conference

Many employers are already CIMSPA partners and require all their staff to have a CIMSPA membership, and we'll be working closely with others to make them aware of the new landscape.

The same goes for training provider partners, who'll be able to access a unified endorsement system that's fully aligned with the sector's professional standards framework and backed by the chartered professional body.

When's it happening?

Mark

Over the next few months, we'll start to unify the two membership bodies, bringing about a single directory of exercise and fitness professionals.

We'll be in regular contact with members, employers and training providers in due course to explain the process of roll-out. We understand this is a big change for the sector and we're here to help every step of the way.

What does this mean for UK Coaching?

Mark

Coaching is a people business; whether you are a swimming teacher or a fitness instructor, you use coaching skills to provide a great experience for participants.

UK Coaching has a learning and development platform that supports those delivering physical activity and sport and as a result of this partnership we'll make this available to CIMSPA members.

UK Coaching will continue to provide all other services to customers and to add value to members through our learning and development platform.

CIMSPA members will be able to get insurance cover through UK Coaching.

Tell us about CIMSPA

Tara

CIMSPA is the chartered professional development body for the UK's sport and physical activity sector. Our vision is to shape a recognised and respected sector that everyone wants to be part of.

We're committed to supporting, developing and enabling professionals and organisations to succeed and inspire our nation to become more active.

CIMSPA promotes recognised and endorsed qualifications, awards and

continuous professional development, through its network of awarding organisations, employers and training provider partners. It also provides a development pathway for members, all the way from students through to chartered and fellowship status.

Will the REPs name disappear in the UK and if so, when?

Mark

Yes. Once all members have had a chance to transfer to CIMSPA, the REPs brand will disappear. This will take about a year, as REPs members renew over the next 12 months or so. ●

Find out more:

CIMSPA: www.cimspa.co.uk

UK Coaching: www.ukcoaching.org

IN BRIEF

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE CIMSPA/REPS AGREEMENT?

- CIMSPA will run the register
- UK Coaching will provide insurance
- The REPs name will disappear after a year
- UK Coaching will share its learning and development platform
- CIMSPA's agreement with Europe Active and EREPS will give international portability
- A new CIMSPA Kitemark will indicate professional status

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MEASURING PROGRESS

Body scanning has become a major fitness trend, offering both operators and members alike insight into their body composition, muscle mass and fat percentage. Operators offering body scanning share their experiences

TANITA

Health Club: Hero Training Club

Who? Kofi Boateng, coach

Where? Manchester

Supplier: Tanita

How long have you been working with Tanita?

We've been working with Tanita for about a year and offer Tanita technology at our Manchester training club.

Why did you decide to offer body scanning?

Health is completely personal to the individual and we're seeing that for a lot of people, the traditional BMI measurements just aren't accurate or detailed enough for them to make informed decisions about their health and lifestyle choices.

How does it enhance the service you provide?

We take a holistic approach to health, supporting individuals and communities with their mental, physical and social wellbeing. We use Tanita's body composition technology alongside our other services – osteopathy, cryotherapy, sports massage, counselling sessions and IV therapy – to ensure that our understanding of our member's health is a top priority. At the same time, we can help our members with tracking and goal setting, making it easier for us to help them unlock their full potential.

What are the benefits you've noticed as an operator?

We pride ourselves on supporting our members with reliable health and



Boateng: body scanning takes the guesswork out of goal-setting

wellbeing data and Tanita enables us to do that. Using it helps us as an operator to build relationships with clients, which is an excellent way of increasing retention.

It allows us to provide clients, both corporate and club members, with a really accurate picture of their body fat percentage, muscle mass, visceral fat and – importantly, their metabolic age.

From these measurements our coaches can then help set achievable goals – whether it's weight loss, muscle gain, improved heart health or simply maintaining a healthy body and mind – and measure progress. It takes the guesswork out of goal-setting and helps us to offer clear routes to our clients to help them get to where they want to be. ▶

Tanita systems check everything from visceral fat to metabolic age



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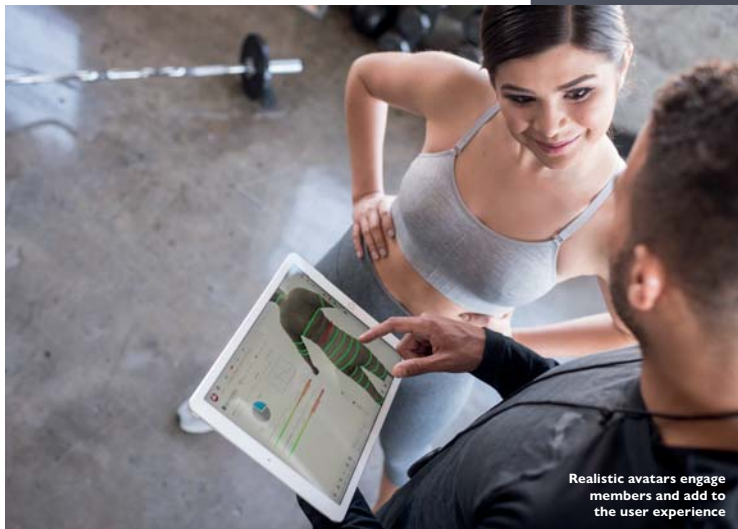


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Realistic avatars engage members and add to the user experience

STYKU

Health Club:

James McLaren Fitness

Who? James McLaren, director

Where? Bury St Edmunds

Supplier: Styku

How long have you been working with Styku?

We've been working with Styku since June 2016.

Why did you choose to use the Styku system?

We were searching for a way to track our members' progress in an effective, reliable and engaging way.

What stood out to us about Styku was its level of precision, as well as its consistency and comprehensiveness.

Styku's technology is aligned with DEXA – a type of X-ray scan that's considered a gold standard in body composition analysis – and offers medical-grade accuracy.

It also offers incredibly realistic 3D scans, the 3D visual actually looks like the user, it's not just a generic-looking avatar that vaguely captures their body shape in outline. This definitely adds something to the user experience in terms of engagement, I think.



James McLaren

How does it enhance your service?

We take motivating and supporting our members very seriously, we want all of our members to achieve their goals.

Providing our members with an understanding of where they're starting from, as well as the steps they need to take to improve their health, provides more of an incentive for them. It's also the best way to gauge a member's progress from a physical standpoint by having tangible proof that they have achieved a result over a period of time.

Simply asking our members to weigh themselves isn't enough. It's not a true reflection of their progress; it's a small piece of a much bigger pie.

The reason Styku is so effective and has been so great for our service is that it goes way beyond the numbers you see on the scale, analysing hundreds of measures to provide a true, visual

representation of members' bodies.

Because of this, Styku has given us much more confidence when it comes to giving members their results.

Styku has definitely enabled us to elevate our service in a number of ways and has become a central focus of our gym and member experience. It's the ultimate way to visualise the story of our members' fitness success.

What are the benefits you've noticed as an operator?

Styku has had a very positive effect on our business. Members, both in the gym and on social media, have emphasised the important role that Styku has played in their journeys and experiences. It's helped to keep them motivated and on track with their programmes, ultimately helping them achieve the results they want.

Of our 110 members, maybe five of them have not had a scan, but they know it's available to them if they'd like to, I think this speaks volumes about how people are viewing body scanning and how valuable it's become within our gym.

Styku benefits our members by enabling our coaches to track and monitor their physical progress over time to ensure they stay motivated and accountable; creating an enjoyable experience that delivers results.

FIT3D

Health Club: Mas Body Gym
Who? Mike Hind, personal trainer
Where? Middlesbrough
Supplier: Fit3D

How long have you been working with Fit3D?

I've been using the ProScanner for a little under a year.

Why did you decide to work with them?

I wanted to provide something really special for my clients, as well as test my skills. With the ProScanner there's nowhere to hide for either myself or the client because it paints a true picture of a client's transformation.

Having been named the Best Personal Trainer in the UK for three years in a row I can't afford to fall behind. The scanner was a must for me.

What's the impact?

My clients travel from around the UK to use the scanner. It's so helpful because it



Mike Hind

Before and after photos are a powerful tool



means I can customise diet and training plans based on the outcome of the scan. They can also physically see, from all angles, how their bodies are changing and how they're getting closer to their goals.

Would you recommend it?

100 per cent. The days of before and after photos are over, people want more information, not just visual improvement, but detailed and accurate body composition data that they can keep track of. Clients want accountability and clubs and trainers should want this too. It keeps clients on target and also improves retention.

It's also a good source of additional revenue for the gym; within the first year the initial investment of £10k had paid itself back twice over. In my eyes, the ProScanner is a one-stop health assessment and progress checker that every facility should use. It's an investment in your business as well as your members.

INBODY

Health Club: 1Life
Who? David Conway, contract manager
Where? Sunbury-on-Thames
Supplier: InBody

How long have you been working with InBody?

We have been utilising InBody scanner technology across multiple 1Life sites over the past 12 months.

Why did you choose to work with InBody?

In this digital age where our members are as well informed as ever regarding health and fitness, we were looking to add extra value to our member experience and a USP for our prospective members.

InBody scanning technology has the perfect blend of accessible health screening with detailed scan results in which we can add significant value to our members by analysing their health metrics and goal setting with them. It's also critical to demonstrate the benefits of the customer's efforts and allow them to both track improvements and identify areas to focus on.



David Conway

What are the benefits?

Proactive tools for member retention is a key business focus within 1Life and the InBody technology allows us to keep our active members motivated, as well as re-engaging sporadic attendance members.

Within our business model InBody scanning is available to all members to maximise our opportunities to have meaningful conversations about how we assess and improve their health.

How have members responded?

Body composition improvements, whether that's weight loss, body fat percentage reduction, and or muscle mass improvements are typically desired by the majority of our customers.

InBody's ability to assess this quickly, in a non-intrusive manner, has proven to be attractive to members who are able



Members can use the InBody scanner and understand results

to use and understand the unit and understand the results, leading to increased motivation and retention.

Scanning is integrated into our induction process, with a follow-up scan six weeks later. We also encourage existing members to have a scan and offer trial testing events where members can have a scan to understand the benefits. ●

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NEW OPENING

DUBLIN'S FINEST


Dubbed Ireland's priciest health club, the new Eden One in Dublin fuses fitness and wellness with a boutique vibe. MD Charlie Bourne explains the vision

“At the end of 2018, I was standing outside Number One Ballsbridge in Dublin,” explains industry veteran Charlie Bourne. “The venue was already home to high-end apartments, retail and businesses. It took me less than 30 seconds to agree to develop a health club. I wanted to do something different and create a first – not just in Ireland but anywhere.”

Bourne, who's been in the industry for 27 years, had previously partnered with the same developers to create a club in West London.

That location maxed out its membership within four months of opening, due to its location, designed aesthetic and focus on creating a quality customer experience. Bourne wanted to do the same in Dublin.

“We'd learned a lot from our previous developments in London,” he says. “But people in Dublin have different expectations of luxury leisure and we knew exactly what we wanted to achieve. ▶



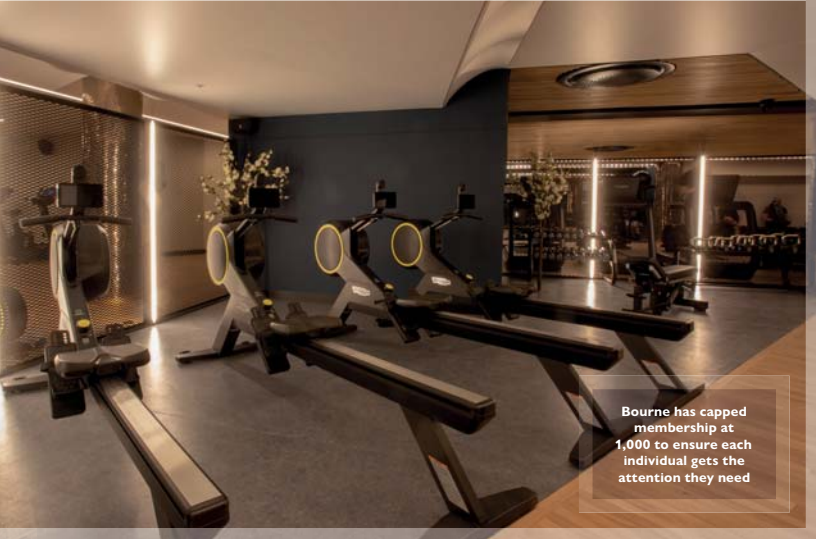
Eden One is part of a
high-end, mixed use
residential scheme

“



“We’ve built a gym, and a spa of a size typically associated with a hotel and combined it with a members’ club for dining and networking”

Charlie Bourne



Bourne has capped membership at 1,000 to ensure each individual gets the attention they need

- "The initial aim was to provide the best gym in Dublin," he says. "Then we decided to also create the best spa in the city – we looked at examples of compact spas, boutique gyms and member experiences to find our formula."

THE BUSINESS MODEL

Taking inspiration from best-in-class examples in health clubs around the world, Bourne developed a brand new combination of facilities for Eden One.

"We've built a state-of-the-art gym, and a luxury spa of a size that is typically associated with a hotel, and we've combined it with a members' club for dining and networking," he says. "Crucially, we've done all of this without including accommodation."

Bourne says the Eden One club and its Eden Elements spa give people a single place to come for all their fitness, leisure and meeting space needs, to combat the fragmented

nature of the leisure industry, which sometimes struggles to meet the demands of busy consumers.

"We wanted to develop a destination that offers everything," he explains. "People shouldn't need several memberships of different facilities to get what they want for their wellness. Eden One brings it all under one roof."

The club is part of the Number 1 Residences mixed-use development, which includes 70 high-end one- and two-bed rental apartments of around 1,350sq ft, as well as upper floor penthouses with sea views ranging in size from 1,300 to 1,950sq ft and the Galileo Penthouse – a 9th floor four-bed apartment extending to 2,400sq ft.

Designed by LUCA interiors the apartment has private lift access and a 1,750sq ft roof terrace with lounge, relaxation and dining areas and views over the city.

Being part of this development creates a catchment of high net worth individuals and this, plus the club's aspirations, are

Around 90 classes are offered every week, from yoga to Les Mills

The gym is
kitted out with
equipment from
Technogym



*“We wanted to develop
a destination which
offers everything. People
shouldn’t need several
memberships to get what
they want for their wellness.*

*Eden One brings it all
under one roof”*



driving Eden One's pricing strategy, which ranges from €1,440 to €3,360 a year, plus a €500 joining fee.

A launch offer of a 20 per cent discount on rates is also currently available, with prices fixed for two years.

A day pass at €175 allows people to enjoy a taster, including two treatments in the spa, lunch and access to the gym.

CUSTOMER JOURNEYS

The club has a footprint of 24,000sq ft, but while a health club of this size would usually have between 3,000 and 4,000 members, Bourne has capped the Eden One membership at 1,000. “We want our members to always get the personal attention they need,” he explains.

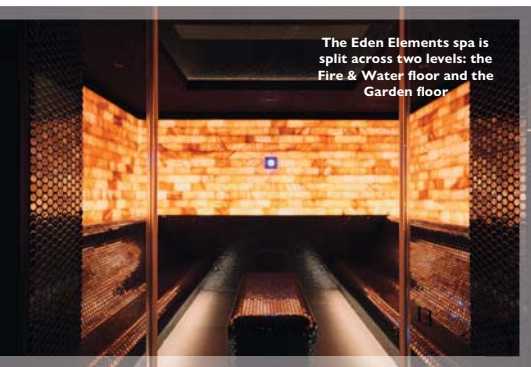
To support this vision, Eden One has developed distinctly different journeys for spa and gym customers.

Members enter the club through the Orangerie, a lounge that's shared with Number 1 Residences, complete with sofas, tables and a range of different workstations.

From the Orangerie a lift takes members up to the health club, where the reception and members' lounge opens out into a welcoming space, with food served from breakfast to 6.00pm and a more formal dinner until 7.00pm.

The members' lounge stays open for drinks until 11.00pm with award winning mixologist Mossy Lelys creating smoothies, mocktails and cocktails to order. As part of their membership, members are permitted to bring up to four guests into the club to eat and to drink.

From here, the member journey splits – gym members scan in to the fitness space, and spa visitors head into private changing and relaxation rooms.



The Eden Elements spa is split across two levels: the Fire & Water floor and the Garden floor

“We’ve gathered inspiration from dedicated boutique fitness studios around the world in order to create our three distinct studios”



► THE GYM

Eden One has 7,500sq ft of gym space, with Technogym cardio and resistance kit, including Artis and Skill Line.

“The gym is equipped so people have a complete choice of workout equipment,” says Bourne. “The gym floor has also been designed so our trainers can host small group classes.”

Connectivity via Technogym’s mywellness cloud means Eden One can take a member from biometric testing to programming and PT in one seamless journey.

“The mywellness app is a useful tool for providing a seamless member journey with valuable extras,” explains Bourne. “We can run everything from onboarding to assessment and programming via the app, and we’d eventually like 100 per cent member uptake of the technology.”

“The Technogym brand is very design-led, so the aesthetic fits with our vision,” says Bourne. “The kit is innovative, while also being intuitive enough to be used by complete beginners. We’re delighted to have wall-to-wall Technogym equipment on our gym floor and in all our studios.”

THE STUDIOS

A week after opening, Eden One had a timetable of 90+ studio classes a week up and running, all bookable through the Mindbody platform, with members enjoying an immersive studio experience led by in-house trainers.

“We’ve gathered inspiration from dedicated boutique fitness studios around the world in order to create our three distinct studios,” says Bourne.

Luxurious changing rooms feature shampoos and body washes specially designed by Bourne’s wife, Claire





The all-day lounge bar, with resident mixologist, creates a club feel at Eden One

The Indoor cycle studio provides an immersive experience with a large wall of LCD screens.

The Mind/Body studio uses AV to create an immersive ambience for yoga, meditation and pilates classes, while the HIIT studio is design-led with a boutique aesthetic – still new to the Irish market – with Technogym Skillrun equipment, Les Mills classes – such as Bodypump – and bespoke Eden classes.

EDEN ELEMENTS SPA

The five treatment room spa is themed around earth, air, water, fire, dark, light, ice and nature, with consideration given to the depth of the experience.

Air in the treatment rooms is 99.98 per cent pure, thanks to a special filter system, shampoos and body washes in the changing areas are bespoke, designed by Bourne's wife, Claire and a sauna master conducts ceremonies using essential oils.

The spa uses Natura Bissé products for treatments.

A 15m infinity pool with water treadmill jets is separated from a hot hydrotherapy pool by a fire break.

All the fires in Eden One are delivered by a steam, water and light process to make them as environmentally friendly as possible, explains Bourne.

As the new Eden One club in Dublin beds down, Bourne is already turning his thoughts to the next stage, and is envisioning new plans for additional clubs, including a potential expansion into the UK. ●

■ HOW MUCH?

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- **EMERALD MEMBERSHIP**
Choice of 12, 24 or 48 visits
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* Includes €200 credit per year for F&B and spa



Crown created a mosaic-tiled feature column for the Lincombe Hotel

TIME FOR A CHANGE

Great changing rooms are one of the main reasons people join a gym. Get inspired by HCM's roundup of the latest high-end installations

LINCOMBE HALL HOTEL Supplier: **Crown Sports Lockers**

Lincombe Hall Hotel, an AA 4-star boutique destination in Torquay, UK, opened a new £2m luxury gym and spa, for guests and members, last November.

Changing room specialists, Crown Sports Lockers, worked on the design, construction and fit-out of the spa, alongside interior designers, Ashton House Design and members of the Powis family, the hotel's owners.

Crown manufactured and installed bespoke male and female changing areas to chime with the facility's coastal theme. The spa interiors include etched glass graphics and graduated blue pool tiling.

Lockers have solid-timber shaker doors with a painted finish in contemporary pastel shades to create a "warm, cosy and relaxing environment", according to Crown's project manager, Sam Palmer, who worked with the team from the first meeting to the final sign-off.

Cork locker key fobs overcame an operational challenge, as they float if lost in the pool, making retrieval straightforward.



"The feature column delivers a memorable first-view on entering the changing room"

Sam Palmer

An unusual feature within the women's changing area is the central seating area, with integral upholstered bench seating and an iridescent mosaic column.

"This feature was a first for us," says Palmer. "The column delivers a memorable first-view on entering the changing room. Its creation was only made possible because we have the manufacturing specialisms to deliver."

Find out more:
www.crownsportslockers.co.uk



Cork locker key fobs are easy to retrieve if lost in the pool

Keyless Co's
Keyless1 locks
are battery-
free, reducing
operating costs

HARBOUR CLUB CHELSEA

Supplier: Keyless Co

David Lloyd's Harbour Club,

Chelsea was refurbished in 2019, with Keyless1 locks from Keyless Co specified in custom gold finish to match the golden-brass modern hardware and gold panelled lockers in the changing rooms.

Keyless Co – a US custom lock manufacturer with global reach – provides sustainable lock solutions that also offer advanced locker room security.

"Locks are battery-free, substantially reducing operating costs," says Keyless Co's Wiktorja Korzeniewicz. "Ease-of-use makes these locks a favorite in the fitness industry, while a reprogrammable master-key system makes day-to-day operations more straightforward."

Find out more:

www.keyless.co

Below: Gold custom locks match the décor at David Lloyd's Harbour Club in Chelsea, London



"Ease-of-use makes these locks a favorite in the fitness industry, while a reprogrammable master-key system makes day-to-day operations more straightforward"

Wiktorja Korzeniewicz



CHANGING ROOMS



Ridgeway's changing room fit-out for Third Space Islington

► THIRD SPACE ISLINGTON

Supplier: Ridgeway

High end gym operator Third Space and locker designer and supplier Ridgeway joined forces to create the changing room facilities at the new Third Space Islington, which opened in January.

Lockers and ancillary furniture were manufactured and installed by Ridgeway in a washed oak finish, with dark grey selected for the remaining fixtures to enhance the overall look.

Changing facilities for children were provided separately for the club's new Little Space gym – the first one to open for the operator – to help the successful segregation of family and adult members.

Mark Cutler, owner of Ridgeway, said: "Our mission was to create changing rooms that not only separated children from adults, but also reflect the unparalleled excellence for which

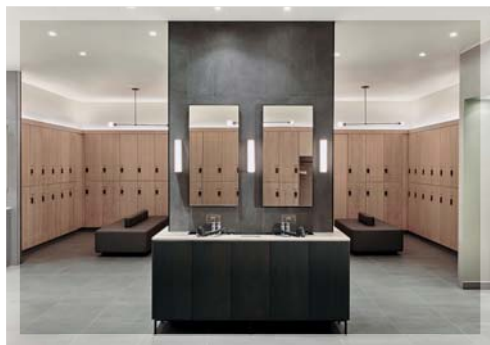
Third Space has become renowned in all aspects of its operations."

Harry Kay, property and facilities director at Third Space, commented: "The reaction from our members to the changing rooms at the new Islington club has been overwhelmingly positive and has helped set a new level of expectation."

Find out more:
www.ridgewayfm.com

"Our mission was to create changing rooms that not only separated children from adults, but also reflect the unparalleled excellence for which Third Space has become renowned"

Mark Cutler





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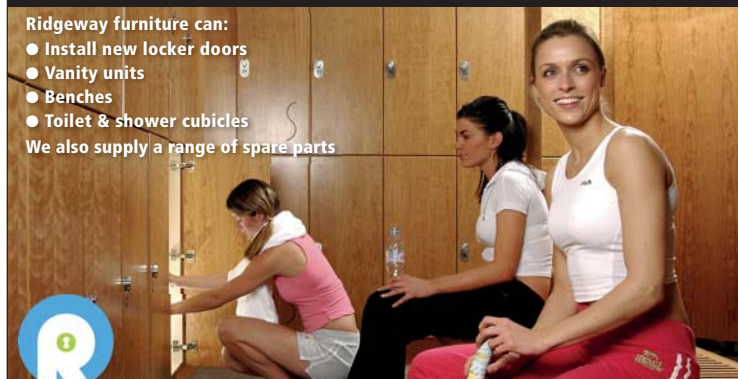


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CORPORATE FITNESS

Capitalising on a broader national reach

DW Fitness First and Gympass have extended their partnership to attract more corporate customers



"We've been able to move even closer to supporting all people to be active, breaking down barriers to make physical activity more accessible"

Eamon Lloyd, Gympass

In August 2017, three DW Fitness First sites were added to the Gympass platform as part of a pilot project designed to increase the clubs' reach among corporate customers.

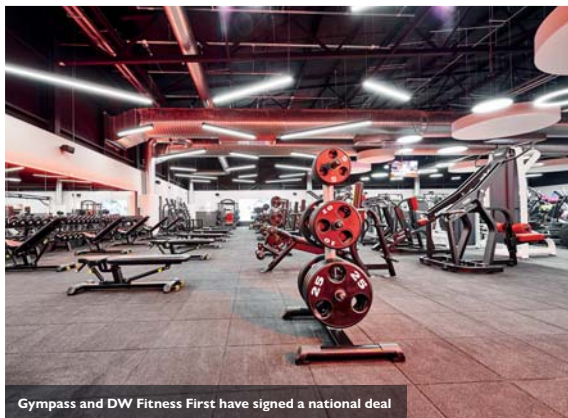
After an initial trial period, during which over 80 per cent of those attending DW Fitness First sites through the Gympass platform were new to the facility, DW Fitness First showed no hesitation in extending the partnership to include 88 clubs across the UK.

Such was the success of this rollout, that the final few clubs in the network have now been added to the Gympass platform – totalling 117 sites available to Gympass members across the country.

The second largest operator of gyms in the UK, DW Fitness First is positioned across major cities and retail parks.

With a strong focus on driving incremental users to the sites, and a particular emphasis on capturing opportunities outside London, Gympass has increased DW Fitness First's exposure and awareness among local businesses, bringing in those who live or work in close proximity to the clubs.

"Since offering our sites to Gympass members, it's been great to see such an increased footfall to our sites across the UK. It's been especially encouraging to know that 80 per cent of those people



Gympass and DW Fitness First have signed a national deal

are in fact new to DW Fitness First," says its managing director, Scott Best. "Our mission statement is to support all people to be active and the partnership with Gympass has enabled us to get closer to this goal. With the full estate now available to the Gympass network, we're looking forward to building on the success we've seen so far."

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The partnership with DW Fitness First is unique for Gympass, due to having 70 retail stores, as well as physical gyms. This means the business is perfectly placed to provide everyone from the serious athlete to those just looking to move a bit more, with the products, environment and encouragement they need to be active.

The partnership with Gympass has also enabled DW Fitness First to promote its retail offering to a new audience by utilising the reach of the Gympass platform. This, in turn, provides added value to Gympass members.

"Our mission is entirely aligned with DW Fitness First's," says Eamon Lloyd, head of partnerships at Gympass. "This has created a great foundation for our partnership and, since working together, we've been able to move even closer to defeating inactivity, by breaking down barriers to make exercise more accessible."

"As the second largest operator in the UK, the national reach of DW Fitness First has had real benefits for our corporate partners, who typically have multiple offices across the UK," says Lloyd. "Whether employees are based in Manchester or Bristol, they're able to access a site close to them. Together we provide a truly inclusive offer for corporate partners and their workforces."

One in four adults in England gets less than half an hour of exercise a week. The Gympass/DW Fitness First partnership seeks to improve this, driving their joint mission to defeat inactivity.

To find out more, visit:

[hs.gympass.com/uk/become-a-partner](https://gympass.com/uk/become-a-partner)



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Third Space



Pulse Fitness adds strength to Third Space

Pulse Fitness has collaborated with luxury health club operator Third Space to supply state-of-the-art strength equipment to its new site in London

Third Space Islington, which opened at the end of January, has a wide mix of state-of-the-art training facilities, including – for the first time – a dedicated space for families called Little Space.

At the heart of the club is a 7,000sq ft flexible training space which includes a custom-built track, rig, performance cardio area and strength training area.



“Third Space shares our passion for quality and innovation and it’s been a privilege to create and supply equipment from our strength line”

Ben Steadman, Pulse Fitness

OFFERING A BESPOKE SERVICE

Taking its bespoke manufacturing capabilities to the next level, leading equipment manufacturer, Pulse Fitness worked in partnership with the Third Space team to supply 15 stations from its superior H Range Strength Line.

All this equipment has been created in a bespoke sand and black colourway and completed with Third Space branding to reflect the sleek design aesthetic of the new Third Space club.

The equipment has also been fitted with 10-inch consoles, which allow users to easily track their reps and see their exertion levels while exercising.

“Third Space shares our passion for quality and innovation and it has been a privilege to create and supply equipment from our strength line, for the new club,” says Ben Steadman, business development director for Pulse Fitness.

“We worked closely alongside the team to create and install strength equipment that would best suit the needs of members and we look forward to supporting them in the future.”

“We’ve been thoroughly impressed by Pulse Fitness throughout this process,”



“We’ve been thoroughly impressed by Pulse Fitness throughout this process”

Rob Beale, Third Space

says Rob Beale, fitness director for Third Space. “Its strength equipment incorporates the very best of British design, alongside some of the most innovative and advanced technology from around the world.

“The team has truly understood the expectations of our members and has supplied strength training solutions which enhance our luxury offering.”

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DiR partners with fisikal

DiR Clubs – the largest fitness operator in Spain – appointed fisikal as its digital partner in 2019, with a 12 month plan for integration. As phase one comes to an end, we talk to Jordi Forns, co-director of fitness clubs at DiR, about why the brand committed to such a fundamental change



"I love that fisikal has created a solution which adapts to our business and not the other way around"

Jordi Forns, DiR

What was your brief to fisikal?

fisikal's brief was to integrate with DiR's existing systems and migrate a number of its services online to improve the operational efficiency of our personal trainer business and enhance the experience for both PTs and members.

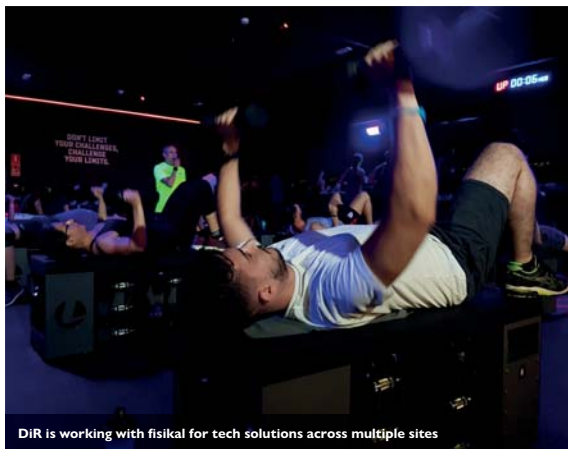
We were operating a largely paper-based system which made it practically impossible, across multiple clubs, to accurately track and monitor how sessions were being sold, the number of sessions being sold, and which personal trainers were making the sales.

Introducing an online solution would also professionalise the service for our members, making it possible for them to access personal training plans, make appointments and pay for sessions, all independently, from a mobile device, instead of having to call the club and book through a very busy receptionist.

How has fisikal addressed your needs?

Phase one has extended way beyond supporting our personal training business, we've also introduced the fisikal online booking solution to our physiotherapy and nutrition advisory booking services.

The solution has been really well received by members and staff. Personal trainers are enjoying the fact that members can access their profile booking



schedule online, then make a booking direct. Having these appointments drop into the diary is an absolute gift.

fisikal has been integrated with DiR's bespoke business management system.

How has that worked?

Our system is very complex and is managing 40 years of company history. It's littered with nuances.

Thanks to fisikal's flexible approach and perseverance, we've developed a bespoke solution that is fully integrated, delivers a seamless service to members and is easy for our staff to operate.

How have you found working with fisikal, day to day?

Great! fisikal is a truly valued partner that delivers as promised, on time and, as integrating a whole new digital

solution across multiple sites is a hugely complicated process, it has been as painless as it could possibly be.

I love that fisikal has created a solution that adapts to our business and not the other way around.

What's next for DiR and fisikal?

Phase two, starting now, sees the introduction of online personal training plans and access to a library of video exercises, as well as generic workouts and online payments.

To read the full interview with Jordi Forns, visit www.fisikal.com/press

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MATRIX GLUTE TRAINER



Matrix Fitness supported major renovations at Long Stratton Leisure Centre

Matrix Fitness refit reaps record results

Long Stratton Leisure Centre, run by South Norfolk Council, underwent a major £2m renovation in 2019, which saw the existing building redeveloped into a state-of-the-art facility

A new 80-station gym, featuring the latest equipment from Matrix Fitness was installed, along with the creation of two multi-use fitness studios, offering over 40 exercise classes a week.

Daniel Infanti, general manager at Long Stratton Leisure Centre comments: "As a council-run gym, we recognised that we needed a facility that offered something to everyone, of all abilities and fitness levels. It wasn't just about modernising, but about really considering the needs of our members and creating something that gave them the best experience.

"I can't speak highly enough of the support that Matrix Fitness gave us throughout this entire project. Not only did they advise us on the design, layout and equipment for the gym, but they also set us up with a temporary gym facility while our refurbishment was being done.

Due to the high standard of this, we even managed to grow our membership by 100 during that time," he says.

The new look included an open plan layout, a balance between the cardio area, free weights and functional training.

This included the latest Matrix Fitness connected strength and cardio equipment, a Connexus rig, S-Drive Performance Trainer and a Double Mega Rack.

MORE MEMBERS

"We've seen a massive uplift in membership since the renovation, we haven't just retained our current members, but have enticed old members back and welcomed members from new

markets," Infanti adds. "We've had to double our class exercise timetable due to increased demand and the footfall has gone through the roof.

We now see 15,000 people through our doors each month, compared to 5,000 before the refurbishment."

After the renovation, targets were to have 800 members by the end of March 2020, more than doubling the original membership. The team had already exceeded that target by November 2019, with membership now at over 920 and anticipated to grow.

Tim Grainger-Smith, head of public sector sales at Matrix Fitness, says: "This project wasn't just about providing gym equipment, it was about support for an incredible renovation from start to finish. We ensured temporary facilities were in place while the refurbishment was taking place, and due to the high standard, new members even joined during this time."



"This project wasn't just about providing gym equipment, it was about support from start to finish of an incredible renovation"

Tim Grainger-Smith, Matrix Fitness

To find out more visit
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PRODUCT INNOVATION

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



Wattbike and Intelligent Cycling will create smart cycling experiences, says **Richard Baker**

Wattbike has announced a new partnership with indoor cycling innovator Intelligent Cycling that will see the creation of a 'truly smart, connected' indoor cycling experience.

Designed to create motivational journeys

unique to each member, the partnership will see Intelligent Cycling software integrated into Wattbike's AtomX bikes to create personalised resistance reactions to match the needs of the rider, allowing everyone in the class to follow the same workout but at an intensity suited to their fitness levels.

"Indoor cycling has evolved dramatically over recent years, just as technology, connectivity and equipment have enhanced the indoor cycling experience," says Wattbike CEO, Richard Baker.

"Now, for the first time, software that displays an immersive user experience



connects directly with the bike of the rider, altering to the exact ability of that user, changing resistance to suit the portrayed environment and intensity of the ride.

"This is the first truly smart group cycling solution. Welcome to the future of indoor cycling."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

WATTBIKE



"This is the first truly smart group cycling solution"

Richard Baker

TRAKK app result of 'huge cultural shift' in consumer awareness, explains **Ben Steadman**

Pulse Fitness has created TRAKK, an app it claims will transform the way operators and members track their journeys and keep members engaged.

TRAKK is billed as 'the ultimate personal training tool'. It will enable users to plan and track fitness goals, create their own workout plans and access a library of ready-made workouts tailored to their goals.

For operators, it will allow trainers to set personalised goals and track members' performance. It will also provide an additional revenue stream, allowing operators to introduce paid subscription services that



"Gym-goers are no longer content with simple information like their weight, reps and calories"

Ben Steadman

will enable members to access nutrition packages and retail discounts.

"Technology is completely transforming the fitness industry and over the last few years there's been a huge cultural shift in

consumer awareness," says Ben Steadman, business development director at Pulse Fitness.

"Gym-goers are no longer content with simple information like their weight, reps and calories. Our new app will track their progress, guide them

through new exercises and give them content similar to having their own PT."

"TRAKK will also allow operators to create personalised programmes for their members."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

PULSE FITNESS

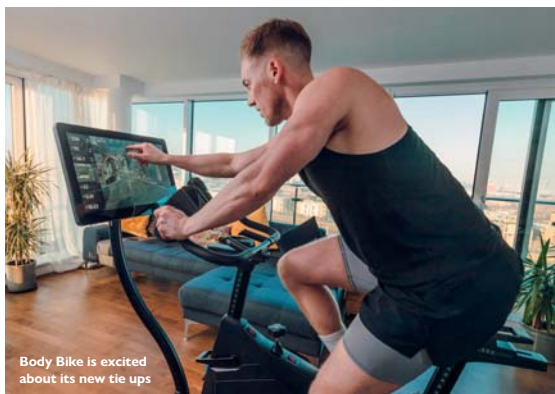
TRAKK is the new app from Pulse Fitness





"We're bringing together the best products on the market – the best bike, the best virtual system and the best cycling classes – to deliver an indoor cycling experience like no other"

Uffe A Olesen



Body Bike is excited about its new tie ups

Smart + Switch is a new standard in on-demand training, according to **Uffe A Olesen**

Body Bike, a Danish indoor cycling specialist, has announced a new partnership with Wexer that will see the companies combine their technologies to create the Body Bike Smart + Switch, a new indoor cycle that will 'harness the power of virtual group cycling'.

The bike is described by Body Bike as having a simple, functional and reliable design. It features a 21" touchscreen, powered by Wexer, offering a curated library of virtual classes.

The screen also features a 180-degree rotation, which enables users to seamlessly switch from training on the bike to

training on the floor with a virtual instructor.

"It's a ground-breaking combination that marks a new standard in on-demand training, delivering the full buzz and engagement of group exercise to those working out independently, either in the gym or at home," says Body Bike CEO Uffe A Olesen.

Kim Hesselund, CEO of The HDD Group, parent company of Body Bike, says: "We're bringing together the best products on the market – the best bike, virtual system and cycling classes – to deliver an indoor cycling experience like no other."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS

BODY BIKE

BodyScript is an essential tool for fitness progress, claims **Tony Garcia**

MYE Fitness Technologies, a US-based tech company specialising in fitness equipment, is set to launch a new body scanner.

Called BodyScript Ascend, the scanner is set to debut at IHRSA later this

month (March), and uses near-infrared technology to accurately track body composition.

Users stand on the BodyScript platform while a wand is applied to the bicep, and within 10 seconds they receive a report accurately detailing their body weight percentage, muscle mass, lean body mass, body mass index (BMI), metabolic rate (BMR) and total water.

Unlike bioelectrical impedance devices, BodyScript is designed to offer accurate results without users needing to remove their shoes.

"The BodyScript Ascend body composition

analyser provides a greater level of accuracy for fitness club members and trainers. In just 10 seconds, subjects receive an accurate set of

measurements to establish baselines and tracking," said MYE Fitness Technologies CEO and president Tony Garcia.

"BodyScript provides an essential educational tool for engagement and a clear path for health and fitness progress," Garcia added. "It features patented technology that encodes the results in a QR code, displayed on the scanner's touchscreen. Users simply scan this code in order to access their results via the free BodyScript mobile app."

Users can download their results on mobile via a QR code to the free app

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

MYE FITNESS TECHNOLOGIES



"BodyScript provides an essential educational tool for engagement and a clear path for health and fitness progress"

Tony Garcia



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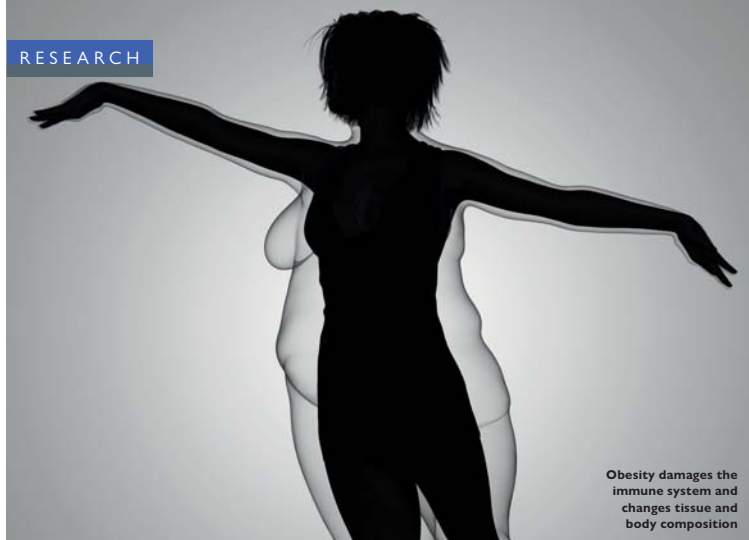
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Obesity damages the immune system and changes tissue and body composition

Old before their time

Researchers say obesity 'should be considered as premature ageing', with some negative effects on the immune system being permanent and not reversible by weight loss

Obesity should be classed as a form of premature ageing, due to it predisposing people to acquiring life-altering diseases normally seen in older individuals.

Authors of a study called *Obesity and ageing: Two sides of the same coin* – by the Concordia University in Canada, reviewed more than 200 papers relating to obesity's effects on human health.

Using the data from the papers, they looked at the ways obesity ages the body from a number of different perspectives – from the immune system to shifts in tissue and body composition.

The study was led by Sylvia Santosa, associate professor of health, kinesiology and applied physiology in the Concordia University's Faculty of Arts and Science.

Santosa and her colleagues looked at the processes of cell death and the maintenance of healthy cells – apoptosis and autophagy, respectively – that are usually associated with ageing.

At the genetic level, the researchers found that obesity influences a number of alterations associated with ageing. These include the shortening of

“The mechanisms by which the comorbidities of obesity and ageing develop are very similar. Later weight reduction will not always reverse the process

telomeres – the protective caps found on the ends of chromosomes.

THE EFFECT OF OBESITY

Telomeres in patients with obesity can be more than 25 per cent shorter than those seen in control patients.

The study also suggests that obesity's effects on cognitive decline, mobility, hypertension and stress are all similar to those of ageing.

“The mechanisms by which the comorbidities of obesity and ageing develop are very similar,” Santosa said.

Researchers concluded that obesity speeds up the ageing of the immune system by targeting different immune cells, and that later weight reduction will not always reverse the process. The effects of obesity on the immune system, in turn, affect susceptibility to diseases like influenza, which can

affect patients with obesity at a higher rate than normal-weight individuals.

Obese people are also at higher risk of sarcopenia, a disease associated with ageing, which features a progressive decline in muscle mass and strength.

Individuals with obesity are also more susceptible to diseases associated with later-life onset, such as type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's and various forms of cancer.

Santosa urges health authorities to rethink their approach to obesity, saying: “I'm hoping these observations will focus our approach to understanding obesity better, and allow us to think of it in different ways,” she added.

“We're asking different types of questions than those which have traditionally been asked,” she concluded. ●

Obesity and ageing: two sides of the same coin was published in the *Obesity Review*



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