

# health club management

WORLD  
FOCUS

JULY 2015

No 226

ON THE COVER

## LAURA TROTT

The Olympic gold  
medallist on inspiring  
people into activity

## Elle Matthews

Driving social change  
in South Africa  
through yoga

## Ray Algar

on the rise of the  
boutique gym

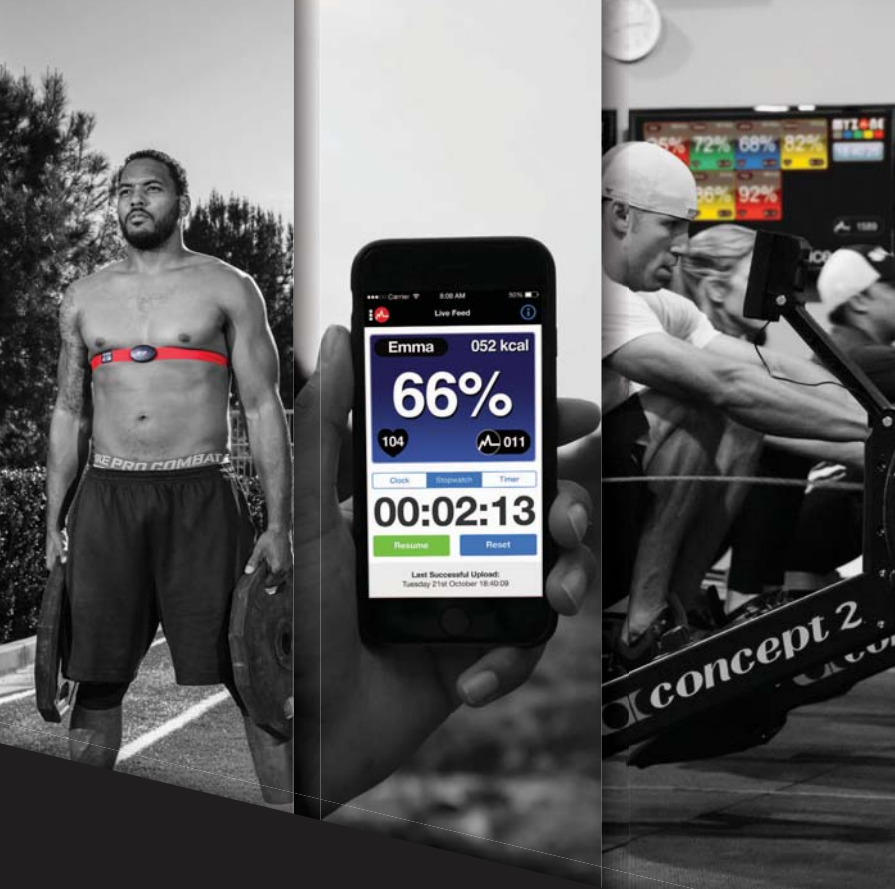


**TOGETHER** IN PERFECT, SWEAT-DRENCHING,  
TOUGHNESS-TESTING, LIMIT-PUSHING **HARMONY.**

INTRODUCING THE ALL NEW  
SPARTAN TRAINING EDITION STAIRMASTER GAUNTLET

[View Demo](#)





## ***WEARABLE TECH DESIGNED WITH THE CLUB IN MIND.***

With 50% of North Americans planning to buy a wearable device within the next year, now is the time to make sure your club is prepared. Visit [myzone.org](http://myzone.org) today to learn more about how a MYZONE® system can help boost your retention rates.

# The power of positivity

**W**hen it comes to member feedback, clubs have a great opportunity to move beyond simply responding to the negative – addressing the causes of complaints – and into fully maximising the value of positive comments. Operators that understand how to harness the power of such feedback can take a step on from merely meeting expectations, instead exceeding them at every turn.

There's a two-pronged opportunity here: mining positive feedback for insights to improve your offering, and using it in your marketing to enhance your reputation.

A number of operators already use Net Promoter Score (NPS) as the basis for decision-making; data from Xercise4Less proves that a business can be transformed as a result (see p38). But at the moment, most clubs still focus on negative feedback – improving the business by removing causes for complaint – rather than using positive feedback as a springboard to even greater things.

However, as IT systems become smarter, clubs can make a gear change. For example, by analysing what advocates are saying about them, operators can identify winning themes around which to build unrivalled clubs.

Dr Melvyn Hillsdon spoke about this sort of approach at May's Retention Convention. He suggested clubs ask members to rate the 'enjoyability' of their experience – and that they then model this data, understand what people enjoy most, and create even more of these experiences. The end result: a club that keeps members happy, and draws in many more, because it's full of all the things people have specifically told you they like.

Clubs can take inspiration from an ongoing London School of Economics initiative called Mappiness ([mappiness.org.uk](http://mappiness.org.uk)). This study uses the GPS in phones, with people beeped randomly and asked to report how happy they are at that moment, wherever they are; this data is then

mapped. A particular focus is on quantifying how people's feelings are affected by their environment – primarily green space, but also air pollution and noise. Characteristics of 'happy' locations are drawn out and could be used to ensure new developments are designed as places people will happily spend time.

Why shouldn't health clubs do similar, finding out which parts of their offering people are most enthusiastic about and using this knowledge to create an unbeatable club?

And of course positive feedback has currency outside your walls too: there's nothing more persuasive than



---

## Understanding how to harness positive feedback represents a chance for operators to exceed expectations at every turn

---

the endorsement of a brand fan. Data from retention software solution Listen360 suggests 20 per cent of a club's advocates will share their feedback on social media if asked. But clubs shouldn't stop there in steering public perception of their brands, instead taking it up a notch with broader reputation management – not just placing testimonials on review sites and social media, but extracting insights from positive feedback that can be used to create a glowing vibe around their brands in all manner of public spaces.

It's time to 'think positive', using advocates' feedback to enhance our brands and offering in and outside our clubs.

**Kate Cracknell, editor**

[katecracknell@leisuremedia.com](mailto:katecracknell@leisuremedia.com)  [@HealthClubKate](https://twitter.com/HealthClubKate)

For more insight and expert advice about the hot topic of retention, visit HCM's new Retention Hub: [www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention](http://www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention)

T: +44 (0)1462 431385

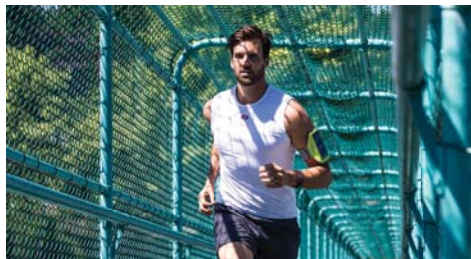
W: [healthclubmanagement.co.uk](http://healthclubmanagement.co.uk)

E: [healthclub@leisuremedia.com](mailto:healthclub@leisuremedia.com)

Subscribe: [leisuresubs.com](http://leisuresubs.com)



p32 A South African filmmaker is using community yoga classes to transform hundreds of lives in the townships



p54 Time to take it up a beat? We ask the experts for their views on how clubs might embrace heart rate training

## 03 Editor's letter

When it comes to member feedback, operators must focus not only on addressing the negative, but on fully maximising the positive, says Kate Cracknell

## 08 People profiles

We speak to cyclist and Olympic gold medalist Laura Trott, Run2Work founder Gordon Lott and Sharon Cook from the design team behind The Third Age Suit

## 12 Letters

Technology is changing fitness, but tracking activity in isolation won't motivate people to stay active, says David Langridge of Fitness First

## 14 News round-up

Pure Gym acquires LA fitness, Asda to launch functional studio concept, Nuffield teams up with Microsoft, payasUgym appoints head of brand

## 24 International news

Fitness First's High Performance Centre in Australia, and Japanese airport to feature running track

## 26 IHRSA update

The IHRSA Global 25 presents details of the leading 25 health club operators around the world

## 28 ukactive update

ukactive executive director Steven Ward outlines the organisation's campaign to get Parliament active

## 29 Diary dates

This month will see FitPro Live taking place in London, UK

## 32 Interview Township Yogi

Elle Matthews, founder of the Township Yogi Project, talks to Kate Cracknell about how the non-profit is changing lives through yoga

## 38 What do one million members say?

How can member feedback be gathered and used by the fitness industry to refine its offering? Jon Nasta reports

## 44 Paying for expertise

Ray Algar reports on the rise of the small but perfectly formed boutique fitness operations, and considers the factors behind their success

## 48 Easy does it

The easier it is to pay, the more we spend. So how is technology like online wallets and SMS payments impacting the fitness industry?

## 54 Take it up a beat

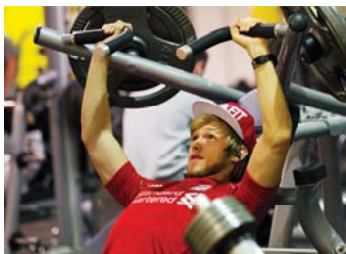
With operators like Orangetheory Fitness putting heart rate training at the core of their offering, we ask our panel of experts where they think the new technology will take us



**p62 ClassPass CEO Payal Kadakia on capturing New Yorkers' attention, and the brand's expansion worldwide**



**p66 Driving retention by creating vocal brand fans**



**p38 Feedback: Your most valuable retention tool**

## **58 Fitness-kit.net special Finger on the pulse**

Is it time your operation embraced heart rate training? We look at some of the exciting new products in this growing area

## **60 Fitness-kit.net special Training for life**

What are the hot products in functional training? We round up some of the latest launches

## **62 Pick 'n' mix**

ClassPass targets those who want to cherry pick the classes they attend. Co-founder Payal Kadakia talks about its swift rise to success and expansion beyond New York

## **66 Retention 3.0**

The future of retention is not about reacting to lost members, but about creating proactive customer care. Dr Paul Bedford reports

## **72 Follow the leader**

According to new research by Deloitte, 86 per cent of UK organisations face leadership issues. Mark Bowden reports

## **74 Fitness on the rise**

The European fitness market continues its strong growth, according to the latest EuropeActive/ Deloitte market report for 2015

## **78 SIBEC: Ask the experts**

We report on some of the pressing issues raised during 'Question Time' at this year's SIBEC UK

## **80 Supplier showcase**

A spotlight on projects by Precor, Wattbike and Physical Company

## **90 The right dose**

Two studies shed light on exercise guidelines, highlighting how much activity and what intensity is best

## Reader services

### **Digital turning pages**

See Health Club Management online  
[healthclubmanagement.co.uk/digital](http://healthclubmanagement.co.uk/digital)

### **News & jobs**

For jobs and news visit the Health Club Management website at  
[healthclubmanagement.co.uk](http://healthclubmanagement.co.uk)

### **Attention buyers!**

Use our search engine to find suppliers and get innovation updates [fitness-kit.net](http://fitness-kit.net)

### **Subscribe**

Sign up for Health Club Management at  
[leisuresubs.com](http://leisuresubs.com), or call:  
**+44 (0)1462 471915**

### **Buyers' guide**

For suppliers of products and services in the health club and spa markets, turn to **p86**



## The Team

Email: contact's full name  
@leisuremedia.com

### Editor

Kate Cracknell  
+44 (0)1462 471906

### Editorial director

Liz Terry  
+44 (0)1462 431385

### Assistant editor

Katie Barnes  
+44 (0)1462 471925

### News desk

Jak Phillips  
+44 (0)1462 471938  
Helen Andrews  
+44 (0)1462 471902  
Tom Anstey  
+44 (0)1462 471916

### Publisher

Jan Williams  
+44 (0)1462 471909

### Sales

John Challinor  
+44 (0)1202 742968  
Astrid Ros  
+44 (0)1462 471911  
Julie Badrick  
+44 (0)1462 471919

### Design

Clara Nicoll  
+44 (0)1767 769645

### Product editor

Jason Holland  
+44 (0)1462 471922

### Subscriptions

Denise Adams  
+44 (0)1462 471930

### Circulation manager

Michael Emmerson  
+44 (0)1462 471932

### Web team

Dean Fox  
+44 (0)1462 471900

Emma Harris  
+44 (0)1462 471921

Tim Nash  
+44 (0)1462 471917

Michael Paramore  
+44 (0)1462 471926

### Finance

Denise Adams  
+44 (0)1462 471930  
Rebekah Scott  
+44 (0)1462 733477



# health club management

Choose how you read  
Health Club Management



Download the  
latest issue



### PRINT

Health Club Management is available in glossy print on subscription. You can sign up any time at [leisuresubs.com](http://leisuresubs.com)



### DIGITAL

Read Health Club Management free on Digital Turning Pages and enjoy extra links and searchability



### PDF

The magazine is also available as a PDF edition for readers who want to read offline or on a tablet

## OTHER RESOURCES FROM HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT

### Health Club Management Handbook

The latest industry stats, trends and analysis all in one place: The Health Club Management Handbook is a reference guide and global resource for decision-makers across the industry.

[Read online healthclubhandbook.com](http://Read online healthclubhandbook.com) ▶

[PDF version healthclubhandbook.com/pdf](http://PDF version healthclubhandbook.com/pdf) ▶

### [healthclubmanagement.co.uk](http://healthclubmanagement.co.uk)

Health Club Management's website features daily health club news and jobs, as well as offering access to digital editions of Health Club Management and links to other Leisure Media magazines and websites.

[Visit www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk](http://Visit www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk) ▶

### Health Club Management ezine

The Health Club Management ezine brings the best of the week's news and jobs to your inbox every Friday. Covering everything from facility openings to sector investment, public policy to new research findings.

[Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe](http://Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe) ▶

### Leisure Opportunities

Our sister title focuses on news, jobs and training. It has a daily website – [www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk) – an ezine and an instant alerts service.

[Visit www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://Visit www.leisureopportunities.co.uk) ▶

[PDF version leisureopportunities.co.uk/pdf](http://PDF version leisureopportunities.co.uk/pdf) ▶

[Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe](http://Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe) ▶

### fitness-kit.net

Our search engine for buyers offers contacts and details for 5,000 suppliers. Find all the connections you need to streamline your buying, and get news via the weekly leisure-kit ezine.

[Visit www.fitness-kit.net](http://Visit www.fitness-kit.net) ▶

[Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe](http://Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe) ▶

### Instant alerts & RSS

Get the news as it happens and find out about the latest job openings and tenders the second they're posted online, by signing up for our free, customisable instant news alerts and RSS feeds.

[Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe](http://Sign up www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe) ▶



# MORE TO ENJOY...

What's hot in Health Club Management's sister magazines



## CLADmag

- \* David Rockwell shares the secret of creativity
- \* Wild places: The challenges of building on the Galapagos islands
- \* Pegasus Capital's Craig Cogut on the global expansion plans for Six Senses



## SPORTS MANAGEMENT

- \* How the Rugby World Cup will rejuvenate grassroots rugby
- \* Could crowdfunding change sports forever?
- \* Baku's Olympic Stadium ready for the European Games



## SPA BUSINESS

- \* Donna Karan's Urban Zen Foundation – merging medical and complementary therapies
- \* Kathy Van Ness on restoring the sparkle at Golden Door
- \* Loneliness: twice as unhealthy as obesity



## ATTRATIONS MANAGEMENT

- \* Disney Legend Marty Sklar on a life lived the Disney way
- \* Panama's Biomuseo: The world's first museum of biodiversity
- \* The latest in dome and planetarium projection

To read or download any of these publications, please visit [www.leisuremedia.com](http://www.leisuremedia.com)



## LEISURE MANAGEMENT

- \* Ceramic artist Paul Cummins on his Tower of London poppy installation
- \* Bristol's plans for an artificial surfing lake
- \* Nigel Walker of the EIS on preparing for Rio 2016



## LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

- \* Exclusive: Asda planning fitness studio concept
- \* £27m Puy du Fou coming to UK
- \* Generation inactive a 'ticking time-bomb'



## SPA OPPORTUNITIES

- \* Virgin Hotels chooses Chicago for inaugural spa
- \* Chanel spa to open at Ritz Paris hotel
- \* Applicants welcome for spa mentor scheme



## AM2

- \* Asian market booming but fears for post-World Cup Brazil
- \* Merlin re-opens Alton Towers after Smiler crash
- \* UNESCO warning over Great Barrier Reef

# People



PHOTO: HANNA WELLS

Laura Trott believes elite sport can inspire the general public to be more active

## My sporting journey began on a trampoline, but I was forced to quit as I kept passing out mid-air!

Laura Trott, cyclist & double Olympic gold medallist

### When and why did you first take up cycling?

I've always been really keen on sport from a young age. My sporting journey began on a trampoline, but I was forced to quit as I kept passing out mid-air! I then began to go down to my local cycling club with my mum, who was trying to lose weight.

### You're now a double Olympic gold medallist and part of the Matrix Fitness pro cycling team. What is the team hoping to achieve this year?

It's our first year, so it's important to set realistic targets. We have a great group of girls who each bring something different to the team, and collectively it would be great to gain enough points to race in the new world tour series next year.

### What's next for you personally?

I'm doing a few of the tour series races with the girls. My short-term goals are to win the team pursuit at this year's worlds, alongside the girls. I'd also like to try and retain my national title. Long-term I want to try and retain both my titles at the Rio Olympic Games in 2016.

### Do you believe elite sport can be used to inspire the general public to have a go?

I believe elite sport can inspire the general public, especially with the excitement and build-up of large sporting events.

The London 2012 Olympics was an opportunity to reach out to those who might not have given cycling a go, or even known much about it. For example, the Olympic velodrome now

offers time on the track for beginners, school children and local clubs as well as elite athletes.

### There's a particular issue around inactivity among women, with a big drop-off among teenage girls especially. How can gyms help?

Health club operators need to address the barriers some girls face when they hit their teens. Is it time, money, other plans getting in the way? It's really important to keep activities fun and social, while also emphasising the importance of being active for a healthy lifestyle. Clubs could offer taster sessions and discounts – including 'bring a friend for free', as girls might feel more comfortable exercising with friends.





Trott and the Matrix pro cycling team are aiming to compete in the new world tour series in 2016

750,000 people cycle to work regularly. We want to match and then beat that number, encouraging more people to run to or from work

Gordon Lott  
Founder, Run2Work

#### **What's the idea behind Run2Work?**

It's pretty simple really. There's so much government and media airtime for getting more people cycling to work: tax incentives, infrastructure and cycle highways, road safety, Boris bikes... But there's no support or encouragement for people to run to work.

In fact, if you use any of the kit you've bought through the Cycle to Work scheme to run to work instead – trainers, shorts, waterproof and reflective clothing, etc – you and your company will be liable to repay the tax to HMRC. How shocking is that? But it just shows how ill thought-through successive government thinking has been towards sustainable transport and getting more people active and healthy as part of their daily lives.

#### **When did you come up with the idea of Run2Work, and what are you hoping to achieve?**

My background is marketing and communications in sport, and it was clear there was a great desire among various stakeholders to get more people running on a daily basis, but we didn't have a focus. So we came up with the concept of #run2workday.

Already 750,000 people cycle to work regularly, with more than 600,000 doing so via a Cycle to Work Scheme. We want to match and then



**Lott's campaign has major employers like HSBC and Virgin Group on board**

beat that number, encouraging more people to make running to or from work – whether part or all of the way – a regular feature of their weekly commute, whether once a month, once a week, or more often.

#### **How are you going about this?**

Our start point was a media campaign with the *Evening Standard*, and securing commercial partners like New Balance, Sweatshop, Virgin Active and Buxton.

It was then a case of cold calling big employers and asking them to encourage their employees to join in #run2workday. We had a fantastic response: Barclays, Morrisons, GE, Capita, Virgin Group, HSBC and the *Evening Standard's* readership meant we had a reach of one million for the first #run2workday on 5 June 2014.

We've since held a #run2workday on the first Thursday of every month and have a growing and vocal audience championing the cause all over the UK.

#### **What's next for Run2Work?**

If we want to achieve our goal of inspiring a million more people to run regularly by 2020, we need to continue

to campaign for the Treasury and HMRC to give running to work equal tax exemption to cycling to work.

Another of our priorities is for the Office for National Statistics to include running to work in the population census. It currently asks if you walk or cycle to work, but doesn't ask if you run to work. Senseless!

We're also campaigning employers to install more showers and lockers in offices – people can contact Run2Work if their offices don't have enough facilities and we'll lobby employers on their behalf, keeping them anonymous.

#### **How can health clubs and leisure centres get involved?**

When we first launched the campaign, our big idea was to invite health clubs to offer 'shower memberships' where people simply pay for the use of the club's showers, but not the gym facilities – although it could of course generate leads for the club.

Health clubs can also encourage their members to run to and from work. This would be complementary to their gym workouts, offering another way to get fitter and healthier.



The challenge with older people is getting them to the gym in the first place. You don't want moving around the facility once they're there to be a challenge too

Sharon Cook, senior lecturer,  
Loughborough Design School

**You've designed suits to simulate the physical limitations of old age and osteoarthritis. Tell us more**

Ergonomics is concerned with improving the safety, comfort, ease and reliability of people's interactions. We can think of this in terms of four Ps: improving how People interact with Products/services in given Places (environments) following Procedures (formal/informal ways of use).

Loughborough is the only UK university to offer ergonomics at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and in 1994 the Ford Motor Company approached us. It had recognised that an ageing population was going to lead to a higher number of older drivers; it wanted its young designers to be more aware of the physical challenges faced by these drivers, in a bid to change the way they designed. We developed The Third Age Suit – a three-dimensional, full-body wearable simulation that allowed the young designers to experience some of the impacts of ageing for themselves.

In 2006, NAPP Pharmaceuticals then commissioned the whole-body simulation of osteoarthritis to raise awareness and improve understanding of this prevalent and often debilitating condition. In 2011, Stannah Stairlifts purchased The Osteoarthritis Suit for use by its design/

engineering teams worldwide, to improve its product designs in the same way Ford had. The suit was also used in NHS staff training to give an insight into what it can be like to be an older patient.

**How do the suits work?**

For a given health condition, research is undertaken to find out more about it. This can be drawn from literature, medical/health professionals and those who have the condition. Based on this data, the requirements of the simulation can then be developed and integrated into the suit. For The Third Age Suit, this included reducing mobility, tactile sensitivity and some aspects of vision.

In terms of possible uses for the suits, workplace design is an obvious area, as are public transport, leisure facilities, shops and shopping centres, restaurants... Really anywhere an element of 'walking in my shoes' will help convey a message.

**How might health clubs use this simulation technology?**

Wearable simulations could help health clubs and leisure centres understand how accessible their facilities are for older users. How easy is it for them to walk into the facility, move around

The Osteoarthritis Suit enables wearers to 'walk in the shoes' of an older person and experience the physical challenges they face

it, get onto equipment? Are the floor surfaces suitable for those who might be at greater risk of a fall?

The challenge with older people is getting them to the gym in the first place, as many view it as 'not for them'. You don't want moving around the facility once they're there to be a challenge too, otherwise it will put them off returning.

The suit can't give a full picture of an older user's experience in a gym. It can't simulate muscle strength – you can't get on a piece of equipment and see what it feels like for an older user – and it obviously can't offer any insight into the psychological factors that might act as a barrier to older people wanting to join a health club.

However, accessibility is a big issue for health clubs – the IFI is already doing a lot of work in the fitness sector to make gym equipment accessible to all users, including disabled people. Older people can have similar physical limitations, and wearable simulations can help you better appreciate those limitations. ●

# Write to reply

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



Using technology to fuel lifestyle change will still require an emotional connection

## Provide members with inspiration, not information

Your recent 'Tracking Retention' article (HCM May 15, p40) raised valid points regarding the impact of physical activity tracking on exercise motivation levels, and why operators should be cautious.

Technology is changing the health and fitness world, but at Fitness First we believe tracking activity in isolation won't motivate people to stay active. Indeed, many people stop using wearables and apps soon after purchase. People's daily lives are repetitive, which reduces the occurrence of new insights; as the insight decays, so does the enthusiasm for tracking.

We've worked extensively with a behavioural psychologist and we know the key to intrinsic motivation lies in a combination of autonomy, feeling competent and accountable, and receiving social recognition. Devices on

their own therefore aren't enough: people also need support and an emotional connection to turn the data into positive lifestyle changes. Although wearables and apps will significantly improve over time, there will always be a place for emotional connections between members and fitness professionals.

So we don't believe it's time to be cautious about tracking, which we feel should be seen as a positive – a small part of the bigger-picture opportunities and growth that digital health will bring our industry over the coming years.

We should welcome digital health with open arms, shaping our products and services today, ready to support the digital health users of tomorrow.

**David Langridge**

Group marketing director, Fitness First

## Leisure technology needs to play catch-up

Leisure-related technology isn't moving fast enough to keep up with member expectations – we're consistently trailing behind other industries in terms of innovation and customer experience. Take an Apple Store for example: you can pick your product, scan and pay for it with your phone and walk out the door.

In many leisure centres, we still expect customers to queue at reception to access our facilities, and the emphasis is still on booking via a computer. Mobile booking has only recently been adopted and apps can be clunky compared to those for far more complex booking processes, such as British Airways' app.

Meanwhile wearables are taking off, leading to even more freely available data on exercise behaviours. We need to embrace this to support retention. Why aren't we using data interpretation to steer a member's personalised training plan, sitting down with them to review their data and providing them with insights to keep them engaged? The industry is in danger of falling further behind if we don't consider new technologies that truly support our customers both in and out of the gym.

**Ross McCaw**

Founder, Our Leisure People



Mobile booking for fitness is still comparatively unsophisticated



fitpro  
LIVE

MATRIX

PROUD TO BE  
SPONSORING

FITPRO LIVE

9 – 10 JULY 2015

[www.matrixfitness.co.uk](http://www.matrixfitness.co.uk)

# UK news update

## GLL bolsters south-west presence with Bath win

GLL has made further gains in the south-west of England by securing the management contract for six leisure sites on behalf of Bath & North East Somerset Council.

The leisure operator will oversee £17m of investment in site upgrades as part of the deal, which sees GLL strengthen its foothold in the region after the recent acquisition of south-west operator Tone Leisure.

The new contract covers Bath Sport and Leisure Centre, Keynsham Leisure Centre, Culverhay Leisure Centre, Chew Valley Leisure Centre, Odd Down Playing Fields and the Bath Pavilion. The £17m modernisation and upgrade will include the construction of a new leisure facility in Keynsham, to include a swimming pool, learner pool, fitness suite and studio space, as the current facility is reaching the end of its useful life. It will also include a major refurb of Bath Sport and Leisure Centre.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=h2c6N>

## Active populations vital for successful cities: study



Activity plays a role in a city's prosperity

New research has reinforced the long-held view that cities which promote physical activity gain an economic advantage.

The findings, presented in June at an Active Cities Summit in Bristol, show that investing in parks and green spaces, removing the barriers to active commuting and encouraging exercise in schools and offices can pay sizeable dividends.

The University of California study – which was commissioned by Nike and UK charity Sustrans – showed areas that foster physical activity enjoy economic benefits such as higher retail revenues, plus lower healthcare and crime costs. The report based its results on more than 500 findings from studies in 17 nations.

"We hope this research will open the eyes of government leaders to the many important benefits of designing cities to support active living," said the study authors.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=w3k7H>

## Pure Gym acquires LA fitness

Pure Gym has emerged as the winner of the long-running race to acquire LA fitness.

The gym chain helmed by Humphrey Cobbold had been in contention to buy the business, alongside Fitness First, Sports Direct Fitness and Terra Firma Capital.

Pure Gym confirmed on 29 May that it had completed the acquisition of LA fitness and its 43 fitness clubs, for a sum thought to be in the region of £60–80m. The acquisition was backed by Pure Gym owner CCMP Capital Partners and a number of banks.

Pure Gym CEO Humphrey Cobbold told *Health Club Management* that the company's

plans to convert most of the LA fitness portfolio into Pure Gym sites – despite the disparity in proposition – wouldn't be an insurmountable challenge. He cited the former LA fitness sites in Cambridge and Poole which have been converted into Pure Gym sites as evidence of this, adding that membership fees would vary according to local market conditions.

Cobbold praised the efforts of LA fitness CEO Martin Long and his team. He said they would support the transition, with a view to then stepping out of the business, but added that discussions are still to be had.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d3T5A>



Humphrey Cobbold (right) recently succeeded Peter Roberts as Pure Gym CEO

## Asda planning fitness studio concept

Asda is bidding to help customers shed pounds from their waistline as well as their shopping bill through a new functional fitness concept.

*Health Club Management* can exclusively reveal that the supermarket giant is planning to partner with gym operator Total Fitness for the venture, with concept drawings suggesting the proposition will be entirely class-based.

The first site is expected to open in Swindon, while *Health Club Management* understands that up to 20 studios could be rolled out nationwide – in or near existing stores – depending on the concept's success.

Asda's planning application says the Total Fitness-operated gym will offer "group-based



Asda has laid out plans to offer group-based fitness classes

fitness classes, as opposed to more traditional gym formats." Total Fitness – which operates 17 sites across the north of England – refused to comment on the partnership.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=b7J2E>



## Youth inactivity a 'time-bomb'



**ukactive is calling for primary schools to test pupils' fitness as they do maths and English**

Only half of seven-year-olds are meeting recommended physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes per day, according to a landmark ukactive report lifting the lid on youth inactivity.

The *Generation Inactive* report examines the extent of inactivity in schools and warns that children will remain a 'ticking time-bomb' for the NHS if decisive action is not taken. With the health service needing to make extra savings of £8.2bn a year by 2020, the report cites government figures estimating the direct and indirect costs of inactivity in the UK to be £20bn a year. Freedom of Information (FOI) requests by ukactive revealed that less than

half of schools surveyed (43 per cent) record the length of time children actually spend being physically active in PE lessons. As a result, the body is calling for primary schools to test pupils' fitness – much like they are tested in subjects like maths and English – to ensure children are meeting basic guidelines.

"The focus should be on ensuring that children are given all the necessary support to achieve the 60 minutes of daily activity recommended in the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines," said ukactive chair Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson.

Details: <http://lei.sr/a=7TT6r>

## Boutiques to shake up sector: Algar

Boutique fitness studios pose a significant threat to traditional gyms, which have taken their eye off the needs of consumers, warns fitness industry analyst Ray Algar.

Established brands such as Fitness First, Sports Direct Fitness and Virgin Active were being taken note of their highly-compelling rivals, says Algar in the *2015 UK Boutique Fitness Studio* report. The report observes that boutique studios are becoming the drivers of overall market growth as they can command hourly fees of up to £30, build loyal communities, are attractive to investors and cannot simply be replicated or priced out by big brands. Algar says the growing number of boutique studios in the UK must



**Ray Algar has examined the boutique fitness market**

now look to the US, where initial successes have been converted into thriving businesses on the back of a solid business model.

**For a full report, please see page 44.**

Details: <http://lei.sr/a=e8v8m>

## énergie Group teams up with The Terminator



**Fitness hero Arnold Schwarzenegger**

énergie Group has secured an exclusive tie-up with one of the most anticipated box office films of 2015: *Terminator Genisys*.

The UK fitness franchise has been confirmed as the official fitness partner by Paramount Pictures to promote the latest Terminator film – starring fitness legend Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The deal will see a 'Terminator takeover' at 70 clubs within the énergie Group's estate, including point-of-sale, website and social media takeovers.

Details: <http://lei.sr/a=d2P6g>

## Xercise4Less wages war on budget rivals in MK



**Xercise4Less CEO Jon Wright**

Xercise4Less is to launch a new £1.5m gym in already-crowded Milton Keynes as it seeks to steal a march on low-cost rivals.

The company has plans for a 44,000sq ft (4,088sq m) club to open in August, directly opposite the site of its rival Pure Gym. Elsewhere, Milton Keynes already hosts a low-cost Kiss Gym and a Gym Group club, while Fit4Less (whose parent énergie Group is headquartered in Milton Keynes) recently closed its site in the town.

The new club will see Matrix supply equipment for more than 600 stations. Details: <http://lei.sr/a=6X7M9>

# What would 300 new members mean to you?

---

## 315 NEW MEMBERS AND OVER £300,000 IN REVENUE

"Partnering with CFM proved to be a **great success** boosting memberships in 2 selected resorts during tough market times.

The association with CFM and Change for Life has **raised the awareness of the Champneys brand** positively in the local community by **encouraging many to exercise who have not used the gym/Club before**.

The organisation and professionalism of the CFM staff are excellent. The support has **far exceeded expectations**. Time is taken to understand the brand and even provide **sales training to help maintain sales** after they left.

Highly recommended."

CHAMPNEYS  
THE HEALTH SPA

---

WE HAVE FILLED HEALTH CLUBS WITH AN  
EXTRA 10,000 MEMBERS THIS YEAR SO FAR.

Want more members?  
Get the experts in.

Call : +44 (0) 115 777 3333  
Email: [uk@cfm.net](mailto:uk@cfm.net)



memberdrive

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS  
IN THE FITNESS INDUSTRY

# UK news update

## Tanni tells MPs: Get behind us



Baroness Grey-Thompson has written to all 651 MPs returning to the new Parliament

ukactive chair Tanni Grey-Thompson has called on MPs to help boost physical activity and get more people moving in their constituency.

In her first major act since becoming chair of ukactive in May, Baroness Grey-Thompson has written to all 651 MPs returning to the new Parliament, urging them to help push physical activity further up the political agenda.

As part of a cranked-up political push, ukactive plans to engage a greater cohort of MPs to back a comprehensive strategy on physical inactivity commensurate to the size of the challenge. It is also encouraging MPs to find out about the inactivity levels in

their constituency and how this compares nationally. As part of this, ukactive is proposing to run roundtables in MPs' constituencies to bring together activity providers, local authority, brands and public health specialists to develop a physical activity plan that's localised and effective for constituents.

ukactive is also offering to provide MPs with a weekly parliamentary summary that focuses on the key physical activity and health matters that have been under discussion in the House of Commons and House of Lords that week.

**For a full report, please see page 28.**  
Details: <http://lei.sr?o=7Z4P3>

## Gym staff need to become 'tech geeks'

Staff in gyms should broaden their knowledge of wearable technology to keep pace with consumers and provide authoritative advice on which pieces of fitness technology are best suited to their individual needs.

According to Graeme Hinde, MD of LFX, it's imperative that fitness professionals keep abreast of consumer trends to ensure the gym remains a relevant and engaging environment for physical activity. He said instructors should be able to recommend wearable tech and apps to match their training goals in the same way they would suggest exercises and nutrition plans.

"We need to rapidly adapt to changing fitness environments – it's vital to keep pace and be able to advise which app works best for each activity," said Hinde at SIBEC 2015. "Instructors need to become tech geeks."

**For a full report, please see page 78.**  
Details: <http://lei.sr?o=k8s8VW>



Graeme Hinde, managing director of LFX

**KEISER**  
THE POWER IN HUMAN PERFORMANCE

**M3I INDOOR  
CYCLE  
WITH  
BLUETOOTH  
TECHNOLOGY  
FOR INTELLIGENT  
CYCLING**



"We researched all the bikes on the market before purchasing. Keiser's M3I was consistently thought of as the best bike. When we then tested the new M3I at an exhibition, it was obvious why. Keiser's bikes are built to last, easy to maintain and compatible with IQ technology, providing us with the best performance and minimal maintenance."

Lucy Edwards  
Project Manager  
Cycle Rhythm

Keiser UK Ltd  
0845 612 1102

@UKKeiser

[www.keiser.com](http://www.keiser.com)



# READY TO RAISE THE BAR?

Take advantage of the hottest female workout trend on the planet.

You know it. Women know it. And even the media is spreading the message: if you want to lose fat you have to lift\*. Strong is the new skinny.

But some women are afraid that weight training will lead to unwanted size. LES MILLS BODYPUMP™, the world's most popular barbell class exploits the rep effect. Low weights and high reps are now conclusively proven to consume 29%\* more energy than regular weight training, burning more fat and creating lean muscle. No bulking up, just shaping up.

Barbell classes remain a huge growth area for clubs, a significant industry trend outperforming dance in the preferred workout stakes.\*\*

The 'Future of Fitness' white paper\*\*\* concluded that RESULTS, entertainment and social bonds are critical to building a sustainable business in a highly competitive market. More than 16,000 facilities around the world have chosen BODYPUMP™ and LES MILLS programmes to power up their business.



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To Book into a Les Mills Insight Seminar call us on 0207 264 0200

Or email us: [LMUK.BUSDEV@LESMILLS.COM](mailto:LMUK.BUSDEV@LESMILLS.COM)

*'We have to find new ways to make people fall in love with exercise'* Les Mills, 1968

# LES MILLS BODYPUMP

\*Volume 4, Issue 1, April 2015 | JOURNAL OF FITNESS RESEARCH 21 Research shows participants use over 29% more energy when lifting a 5kg weight with fast reps compared to lifting a 20kg for less reps for the same length of time.

\*\*'Strength and weight' is the most popular group exercise genre – it drives 20% of the total global group exercise attendance, Les Mills Global Scoreboard Survey 2014.

\*\*\*Nilsen Global Consumer Fitness Survey 2013)

# Independent news

## Rush Fitness set for expansion



The stylish Aylesbury club will have colour-coded zones for gym floor training

Trainer to the stars Mark Anthony plans to expand his low-cost gym concept Rush Fitness in sites across the south-east of England.

Having launched the first two Rush Fitness sites – Uxbridge and Southend – in 2013, Anthony will now open a new health club in Aylesbury this August, with at least one more to follow this year in London Woolwich.

Anthony previously owned his eponymous club in Notting Hill – where he trained celebrity clients including Katie Price, Billie Piper and Lucy Mecklenburgh – before selling the site to Heartcore Fitness in July 2014.

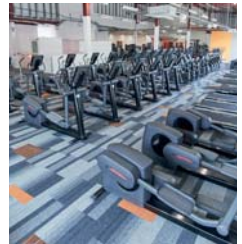
The independently-owned Rush clubs are a low-cost, no-contract proposition, with a notable emphasis on group fitness. The Aylesbury gym will offer pre-opening membership from £12.99 a month, rising to £24.99 a month when the club opens. “We believe that results driven by motivation,

not a 12-month tie-in, should be the catalyst for a long-standing gym membership, so there will be no joining contract,” said Anthony. “And unlike many low-cost gyms, Rush Fitness will offer a wide range of classes free to all members, including group cycling, Boot Camp, Mind & Body, Rush Hour and even Look Good Naked!”

Leisure design and build specialist Createability has started work on the Aylesbury club – a £450,000 project to develop the 1,000sq m site in Friars Square shopping centre. The development includes entry pods for 24-hour access, colour-led zoned areas for strength work, CV and functional training, an aerobic/cycling studio and two changing rooms. The club will feature more than 120 stations, plus a functional training suite. Intenza Fitness will be the main equipment supplier.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=u3d3Q>

## truGym lands marina site for flagship facility



The Medway club has over 220 stations

Family-run operator truGym has unveiled its latest UK site – a flagship 20,000sq ft (1,858sq m) facility which was originally going to be the chain's first club.

The new site forms part of a large complex in the Chatham Dockside marina area of Medway, Kent. It has received the latest truGym fit-out, which will soon be retro-fitted across the entire estate.

truGym managing director Parm Singh previously told *HCM* that the site was intended to be the first ever truGym, to launch in 2010, and said the chain had been working to acquire it ever since.

The Medway club comprises more than 220 stations, including a large Hammer Strength freeweights zone, plus Life Fitness cardio and strength zones. There's also a military rig for functional and circuit style training, plus dedicated cycling and group ex studios offering a wide range of classes.

The club also features luxurious changing facilities with Italian-made furniture and fixings, as well as saunas and steamrooms.

“We're pleased to open our latest club, which shows the high standards we're offering our members,” said Singh.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=c2N4Z>

hattrick  
marketing

Effective marketing  
CAMPAIGNS\*

\*that will energise your sales



0870 609 3216

[www.hattrickmarketing.com](http://www.hattrickmarketing.com)

## FEATURE GYM

Browse a state-of-the-art concept gym showcasing cutting edge, innovative equipment for futuristic training and equipment ideas as well as sports nutrition sampling and secondary spend seminars

## POOL & SPA ZONE

A comprehensive array of pool and spa products, design concepts, with advice from industry experts on how you can benefit. Enjoy a spa treatment from one of the expert therapists

## LEISURE FACILITIES CONFERENCE

Targeted at Gym and Leisure Centre Owners & Managers, talks will deliver key collateral on industry trends and essential business systems such as pay systems, signage, financing and much more

## GROUP FITNESS

An interactive area providing varied faster sessions in everything from HIIT, contemporary Personal Training, Olympic lifting, step & tone, Pilates and much more

## YOUNG FITNESS & PLAY CONFERENCE

Dedicated to the education of children from primary school upwards with seminars and demonstrations on physical literacy, tackling childhood obesity, health, nutrition and soft play

## 1000 CLUB

Take top line partners and customers into a professional meeting space to close deals, network and discuss opportunities

## SECONDARY SPEND

Learn more about how to maximise revenue with presentations on secondary spend options including sports nutrition, accessories and clothing



# LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK

22-23 SEPT 2015  
NEC Birmingham UK

HEALTH • WELLBEING • PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

# THE HEARTBEAT OF UK LEISURE

**Refreshed. Reinvigorated. Revitalised.**

Leisure Industry Week is the UK's leading leisure trade expo, showcasing over 300 exhibitors at the NEC in September each year.

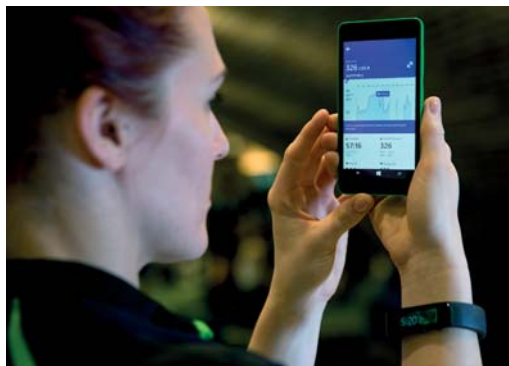
Help change the UK leisure industry and contact  
Phil Mortimer, Show Manager on [p.mortimer@bodypower.tv](mailto:p.mortimer@bodypower.tv) for further details

Register today for **FREE** entry (saving £30) at [liw.co.uk](http://liw.co.uk)



# Technology news

## Nuffield teams with Microsoft



Vibrations and on-screen instructions guide users through each stage of the workout

Nuffield Health has secured an exclusive tie-up with the recently-released Microsoft Band to produce a series of workouts for wearable tech users on the move.

As the UK fitness and wellbeing partner for the Microsoft Band, Nuffield Health fitness experts have created guided workouts designed to help people of all fitness levels get the most out of their workouts. Each of the nine training sessions available can be downloaded from the Microsoft Health app straight

onto the Microsoft Band being worn on the user's wrist, enabling them to exercise wherever and whenever they want to.

Once downloaded to the Microsoft Band, small vibrations and on-screen instructions guide users through each stage of the workout.

At the same time, Microsoft Band measures heart rate and calories burned to provide key stats from a workout, to help people monitor their progress and make improvements to their fitness regime and wider lifestyle.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d5D2E>

## David Lloyd Leisure in tie-up with Sufferfest



Sufferfest features licensed race footage and 17 creative storylines

David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) has continued its investment in class-based fitness through an exclusive partnership with the Sufferfest video-based indoor cycling programme.

A high-intensity interval training programme (HIIT) that transforms the indoor cycling experience, the Sufferfest has just launched at David Lloyd Southampton and will roll out to selected clubs across the DLL estate. Endorsed by the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale), the world governing body for cycling, the Sufferfest programme will launch in club studios and gym floor Wattbike zones.

The Sufferfest has been developed by world-class cycling coaches and is driven by synchronised soundtracks, 17 creative storylines and licensed race footage.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=G2s2V>

**DON'T MISS OUT  
- GET YOUR  
CATALOGUE NOW.**

The highly anticipated Escape Fitness 2015 Catalogue is out now! Stand out by being one of the first to get your essential guide to functional training solutions.

Order your 2015 Catalogue now  
[www.escapefitness.com/2015hcm7](http://www.escapefitness.com/2015hcm7)  
[sales@escapefitness.com](mailto:sales@escapefitness.com)  
0800 294 2803

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [p](#) JOIN THE CONVERSATION.



escape **2015**

# Training news

## Are you the world's best personal trainer?



Former finalist Fiona Ross in action

A competition has been launched to find the world's best personal trainer, with an expenses-paid trip to the grand final and a US\$5,000 prize up for grabs.

Life Fitness has teamed up with a host of global fitness organisations, including the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs), EuropeActive, Life Fitness Academy and the American Council on Exercise (ACE) to launch the fifth annual Personal Trainers to Watch programme. The competition seeks to recognise and reward elite trainers around the world who embody passion and commitment to the profession.

Nominations will be collected from 1 June to 15 July, with the top 10 finalists competing in a live global competition in October (location TBC) to determine the winner of the US\$5,000 grand prize. Nominees will be judged on leadership, client motivation, inspiration, certifications and past achievements.

Details: <http://lei.sr?o=c6B3C>

## Lifetime eyes behaviour change

A new training course designed to equip exercise professionals with the behaviour change skills needed to get inactive people moving is being delivered to Everyone Active's exercise referral specialists.

Delivered by Lifetime Training, the Lifestyle Activity Coaching course was developed in consultation with the Academy for Health Coaching and led by physician Dr Tim Anstiss, who specialises in applying the science of positive psychology to health and care settings. The course addresses the increasing evidence that the success of physical activity interventions relies heavily on changing emotional and psychological attitudes towards exercise and active lifestyles.

Everyone Active has become the first leisure operator to invest in the new training course. Everyone Active fitness motivators – who look after exercise referrals – are currently undertaking the 12-week course, with plans to harness the skills across the business and its public health division Everyone Health.

"Research within physical activity promotion has identified motivational interviewing as one of the strongest predictors of long-term behaviours," said Everyone Active's Tiffeny Gould. "With 50 exercise referral schemes delivered across the company, an opportunity to improve the quality of delivery and impact on local communities couldn't be missed."

Details: <http://lei.sr?o=k2q8E>



Lifestyle services promoting exercise are becoming a key aspect of public health

# HYDRO+ WE'VE GOT BOTH SIDES COVERED INCREASED RETENTION



Often, people ask what makes members cancel their membership. A more important question would be what keeps members coming back week after week?

**Answer:** Members are more likely to keep coming back if they are getting the results they seek.

@hydroplus 01865 987910  
hydroplus info@hydroplus.co.uk

[www.hydroplus.co.uk](http://www.hydroplus.co.uk)

Better Hydration = Better Results = Happy Members

Hydro+  
more than just water

## People news

### Precor promotes Steve Shaw

Steve Shaw has been named group account director at Precor as part of a new-look sales team at the fitness supplier.

Following sales director Jez Whiting's recent departure after nearly 16 years at the helm, the company is reorganising its sales team and looking to make several new additions.

A spokesperson told *Health Club Management* that Shaw's promotion will see him perform a different role from Whiting (who has become MD of Intenza Fitness UK), with Precor still recruiting for an overall head of UK position and a field sales manager.

Shaw, who has been with Precor since 2007, said of his new role: "The Precor UK sales team are extremely experienced and I'm looking forward to working with the group to continue to grow and manage the business."

"Precor continues to be at the forefront of innovation and we're privileged to be able to provide operators with high quality, technologically advanced equipment to enhance business needs and help achieve their goals." Meanwhile, Rachell Crew has



Shaw has been with Precor since 2007

joined Precor as sales consultant for the UK central region. Formerly at Technogym, Crew has gained valuable knowledge across all areas of the fitness industry during nearly 20 years in the business, having worked in various capacities at Alliance Leisure, PTE and as a fitness manager and instructor at various gyms.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=B5M3x>

### PayasUgym appoints new head of brand



Alvarez is a seasoned marketer

PayasUgym has named Alejandra Alvarez its new head of brand, as the gym pass provider bids to make a transition from pure online lead generation to becoming "a more holistic health and fitness brand".

Fitness fanatic Alvarez has been an instructor of Les Mills classes such as Bodypump and RPM for the past eight years and has gained first-hand experience through teaching eight classes a week.

In addition, she's a seasoned marketing professional, having spent the past decade in senior roles at P&G and Energizer.

"I'm delighted to be joining the payasUgym team, where my two passions meet," said Alvarez. "Our job is to add value by deeply understanding the goals of customers and fitness providers."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=p3p5v>

### Muench to step down as IHRSA Europe director

Hans Muench has announced he will leave his position as IHRSA's director of Europe from 1 February 2016 to pursue other opportunities.

Over the coming months, Muench will continue working with IHRSA on further development and implementation of a European strategic plan that he spearheaded last year, as well as overseeing preparations for the 2015 IHRSA Europe Congress in Marseille.

"With his entrepreneurial spirit, strategic planning ability, and depth and breadth of experience in the fitness industry, Hans has played a key part in shaping IHRSA's role in Europe," said Joe Moore, president and CEO of IHRSA. "We're pleased that he will continue to work with us over the next several months on strategic planning."

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=X4t6v>

# HYDRO+ WE'VE GOT BOTH SIDES COVERED INCREASED REVENUE



Hydro+ helps to keep members hydrated more than just water and increases their chances of achieving goals and targets.

Increased hydration means members:

- Reduce their recovery time
- Increase their performance (endurance & strength)
- Enhance their fat loss capability
- Increase their mental function



@hydroplus 01865 987910

hydroplus info@hydroplus.co.uk

[www.hydroplus.co.uk](http://www.hydroplus.co.uk)

Better Hydration = Better Results = Happy Members



# International news

## Paltrow launches food take-out company

Gwyneth Paltrow and her diet and exercise mentor, Tracy Anderson, have created a food take-out company in the US: 3 Green Hearts. The company will offer juice, quinoa, kale ravioli and 'frosting shots' – a high nutrient liquified raw wheatgrass.

"I've figured out how to make the best cookies that have no gluten, no soy, no dairy, no nuts, no eggs – all the main allergens. It's also about me being able to settle the inflammation fire that's in so many bodies," says Anderson.

In the future, 3 Green Hearts may also offer green cleaning products and beauty items, the company has indicated. Details: <http://llei.sr?o=F6Q5e>

## EuropeActive signs co-operation pledge

EuropeActive has signed an "historic memorandum of co-operation" with UNI-Europa and the European Association of Sport Employers (EASE) to advance the position of social dialogue for the European fitness sector.

EuropeActive has outlined its commitment to working closely with its social partners – employers and employees – to jointly develop solutions to be a driving force for the continued successful economic development of the fitness industry at a European level.

Details: <http://llei.sr?o=h2c3u>

## Vivafit grows overseas reach with new markets

Portuguese health club operator Vivafit is expanding its reach with the signing of the first franchised club in Taiwan, belonging to an American/Taiwanese couple. The 170sq m Taipei club is expected to be the first of a chain of some 150 Vivafit clubs in Taiwan.

The first Vivafit also opened in Dubai in June, at the city's largest office building. The franchisee is a local businessman, but all of the staff will be recruited from Portugal.

Meanwhile, there are plans to open 20 clubs in India within five years, with the second set to open in December.

Vivafit now has clubs in Portugal, Spain, India, Singapore, Indonesia, Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Uruguay and Dubai. Talks are ongoing in Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar, with signings expected during this year. Details: <http://llei.sr?o=N6f6G>

## Go Health enters SA market

A health club chain launched in South Africa in May, with aims of having 40 clubs by 2019.

Co-founded by former Virgin Active COO Rory Sweetlove, the first GO Health club opened its doors on 15 May, at a shopping centre in Northwold.

"GO Health's mission is to be the model 21st century health club which inspires and empowers people to make exercise part of their everyday life," says Sweetlove.

When putting together this customer-focused concept, the team asked themselves why health clubs had become so expensive, why there was so little choice, and why

members should pay for a pool hardly anyone used. The team has tried to respond to all of these questions at a competitive monthly price of R259 (£14, \$21, 19) – a fraction of the cost of established, branded clubs.

The concept includes Technogym fitness equipment, qualified wellness consultants and a bespoke fitness programme via a wellness key and app. There's also a health bar offering super juices, smoothies, gluten-free muffins and salads.

"Fitness is a holistic philosophy that should stay with members beyond the club and follow them into their lives," says Sweetlove.

Details: <http://llei.sr?o=s5g2u>



Go Health has entered the South African health club market as a low-cost player

## Active design for Japanese airport

Japanese architects are getting out of the blocks in terms of promoting active design ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, with Narita Airport's newly-opened Terminal 3 centred around an indoor running track.

The Tokyo Olympics look set to have a strong theme of active design, with London-based architects Arup set to masterplan the Games. The cycling helmet-shaped Olympic Stadium has been masterminded by Zaha Hadid, and several other wellness-related facilities are also in the pipeline.

Tokyo-based creative lab Party led the innovative airport project, which sees a colour-coded circuit of running lanes to help passengers navigate the terminal. There are no moving walkways in the terminal. Party chief creative officer Naoki Ito says the aim is to promote activity in a playful manner. The lack of expensive walkways and illuminated signage has halved the cost of the terminal.

Details: <http://llei.sr?o=q5s6c>



Tokyo airport theme is 'physical activity meets economy'

## Fitness First launches HPC



Fitness First has refurbished a Melbourne club to trial a high performance club concept

Fitness First launched a brand new concept club in Melbourne, Australia, in May. Progress-driven, science-based and results-focused, the High Performance Club will teach members to train like an athlete to get superior results.

An AU\$1m (701,000, \$802,000, £510,000) refurbishment and rebrand of an existing club, the ethos behind it is that you don't have to be genetically gifted to have the body of an athlete – you just have to train like one. Fitness First says this approach to fitness is a game changer and it has invested heavily in research, technology, expert advice and gym floor staff to deliver the concept.

All members will be given a highly tailored programme which will be reassessed every 12 weeks. They can choose to train on their own, with a coach or in a group, or join a pro-league team and compete in a six-week season.

Facilities include a MoveLab – which uses video technology for analysis – alongside Life Fitness cable-based equipment, a 20m sprint track, free weights, a high impact commando zone, five Olympic lifting dual cell cages by Iron Edge, treadmills and Woodway self-powered treadmills, a group cycling studio, group exercise studio and a stretch area.

Details: <http://lei.sr?a=57s8D>

## Equinox: Music to match yoga poses

Derek Beres – a yoga practitioner, DJ and music producer – has created a class called Flow Play for fitness company Equinox. The class showcases choreographed playlists designed to incorporate scientific research and understanding about how music and movement influence brain chemistry.

Launching in October at Equinox clubs in LA, New York, Chicago and Dallas, the class was developed following Beres' experience of yoga teachers unknowingly mismatching songs to poses. For example, Beres says playing classical Indian music is too relaxing for flow classes, while mainstream music that people recognise takes them out



Equinox is applying science to music use in yoga classes

of the moment and back into their lives. "The goal is to empower teachers with some of that research and knowledge so they make the best possible use of the music," he says. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=w7t3z>

WeckMethod  
**RMT<sup>®</sup>**  
**Club**

**ROTATIONAL**  
**MOVEMENT**  
**TRAINING**



**SWING IT.**  
**STRIKE IT.**  
**ROTATE IT.**



**GET REPS**  
**ACCREDITED**

[physicalcompany.co.uk](http://physicalcompany.co.uk)  
[sales@physicalcompany.co.uk](mailto:sales@physicalcompany.co.uk)  
[physicalcompany](http://physicalcompany)  
01494 769 222

**Physical**  
COMPANY



# WORLD LEADERS

The IHRSA Global 25 provides a stat-based snapshot of the leading 25 health club operators around the world. Jon Felf takes a look at the 2014 figures

Last month, IHRSA announced the release of *The IHRSA Global 25*, which lists the top 25 health club companies worldwide in terms of revenue, memberships and units. This prestigious list of club operators is based on *The 2015 IHRSA Global Report*, which profiles nearly 400 club businesses worldwide.

Last year, one of the key points we made when reporting on *The IHRSA Global 25* was that it appeared operators had put the recession behind them, and were sorting out the keys to successful performance going forward. Based on the numbers produced by the *Global 25* for 2014, it seems they've decoded the riddle, resulting in uniform growth across all categories.

## Club count

In a macro sense, the 'number of facilities owned' chart (Figure 1) reveals both stability and expansion. The top six companies for 2014 are LA Fitness International, 24 Hour Fitness USA, HealthCity/Basic-Fit, GoodLife Fitness and Énergie Cardio, Fitness First Finance Ltd, and Virgin Active. The list is nearly identical to that of 2013, with a bit of jockeying between positions three and five.

The remaining roster includes some newcomers, like b-fit Health and Sports Inv and Trading Corp, McFit, Groupe Moving, Clever Fit, and Actic. Meanwhile stalwarts Holmes Place and David Lloyd Leisure have disappeared from the list, as have Pure Gym and LA fitness (UK). In addition SATS, Elixia and Fresh Fitness (Norway and Sweden) merged, becoming Health & Fitness Nordic.

Nearly every existing player from the 2013 list has grown in terms of number of facilities owned. Again using the top six as an example, their combined number grew from 2,206 to 2,349 year-on-year. Others experienced significant growth: ClubCorp expanded from slightly more than 150 units to 200; Gold's Gyms International scaled from 110 to 148; and BioRitmo/SmartFit grew from 120 clubs to 186.



The BioRitmo and SmartFit portfolio grew from 120 to 186 clubs in 2014

Fig 1 Number of facilities owned (2014)

Rank & Company	Number owned	Other units	Total units
1 LA Fitness International	630	N/A	630
2 24 Hour Fitness USA, Inc	450	N/A	450
3 HealthCity/Basic-Fit	350	N/A	350
4 GoodLife Fitness and Énergie Cardio	327	N/A	327
5 Fitness First Finance, Ltd	325	Franchised: 45	370
6 Virgin Active	267	N/A	267
7 b-fit Health and Sports Inv. & Trading Corp	235	N/A	235
8 McFit	223	N/A	223
9 ClubCorp	200	N/A	200
10 Groupe Moving	198	N/A	198
11 Clever Fit	192	N/A	192
12 Health & Fitness Nordic	188	N/A	188
13 BioRitmo/SmartFit	186	Franchised: 25	211
14 Town Sports International Holdings, Inc	158	Managed: 10	168
15 Fitness World	154	N/A	154
16 Talwalkers Better Value Fitness, Ltd	150	N/A	150
17 Gold's Gym International	148	Franchised: 541	689
18 Actic	144	N/A	144
19 Snap Fitness	128	Franchised: 1,306	1,434
20 Central Sports Co., Ltd	116	Managed: 67	183
21 LifeTime Fitness, Inc	113	N/A	113
22 Nordic Wellness	109	N/A	109
23 Renaissance, Inc	108	Managed: 11	119
24 Fitness Time	100	N/A	100
25 Bodytech S.A.	97	Franchised: 32	129

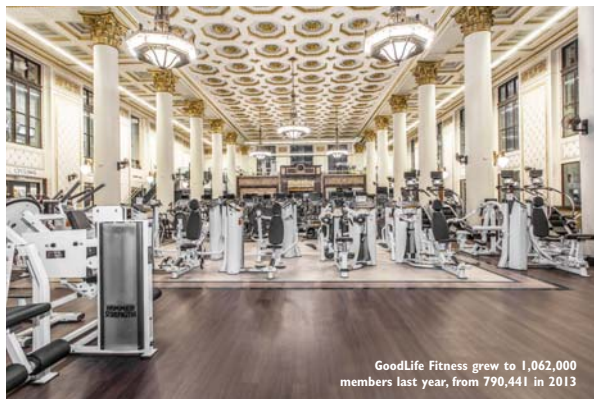
Units run by Town Sports International Holdings (NASDAQ: CLUB) fell from 162 to 158, but this drop was an anomaly.

## Amassing members

In keeping with this across-the-spectrum growth, the data shows a similar trend for

membership numbers. The top five (Figure 2) remain identical in rank from 2013 to 2014 – Planet Fitness, 24 Hour Fitness USA, Gold's Gym International, Anytime Fitness and Virgin Active – but their overall membership numbers grew from around 14.8 million in 2013 to 16.7 million in 2014.





## About IHRSA

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

To learn how IHRSA can help your business thrive, visit [ihrsa.org](http://ihrsa.org). Locate an IHRSA club by visiting our site: [www.healthclubs.com](http://www.healthclubs.com)

**Fig 2 Number of members (2014)**

Rank & Company	Members
1 Planet Fitness	6,065,000
2 24 Hour Fitness USA, Inc	4,000,000
3 Gold's Gym International	3,000,000
4 Anytime Fitness	2,300,000
5 Virgin Active	1,320,605
6 McFit	1,300,000
7 HealthCity/Basic-Fit	1,100,000
8 GoodLife Fitness and Energie Cardio	1,062,000
9 Snap Fitness	910,000
10 Fitness First Finance, Ltd	857,597
11 Life Time Fitness, Inc	683,530
12 BioRitmo/SmartFit	644,000
13 Fitness Time	604,474
14 Health & Fitness Nordic	500,000
15 Town Sports International Holdings, Inc	484,000
16a Crunch	475,000
16b Fitness World	475,000
17 David Lloyd Leisure	450,000
18 ClubCorp	430,000
19a Central Sports Co, Ltd	400,000
19b Fit for Free/SportsCity	400,000
20 Renaissance, Inc	396,233
21 Clever Fit	375,000
22 World Gym Taiwan	372,401
23 Alex Fitness	350,000
24 b-fit Health and Sport Inv. and Trading Corp	300,000
25 Kieser Training AG	296,000

Once again, all those listed among the top 25 operators by member numbers experienced growth in 2014 – some in dramatic ways. GoodLife Fitness expanded from 790,441 members in 2013 to 1,062,000 last year; BioRitmo/SmartFit achieved a growth from 400,000 to

**Fig 3 Revenues (2014)**

Rank & Company	Revenues \$ millions
1 Life Time Fitness, Inc	1,291
2 Virgin Active	1,051
3 Anytime Fitness	967
4 Fitness First Finance, Ltd	773
5 Central Sports Co, Ltd	485
6 Health & Fitness Nordic	482
7 Town Sports International Holdings, Inc	454
8 McFit	415
9 HealthCity/Basic-Fit	399
10 Renaissance, Inc	386
11 Planet Fitness	280
12 BioRitmo/SmartFit	210
13 Russian Fitness Group	
(World Class, Lite & FitKult)	179
14 Bodytech	170
15 Fitness World	169
16 The Bay Club Company	150
17 Bodytech S.A.	130
18 Fitness Time	126
19 World Gym Taiwan	122
20 Kieser Training AG	121
21 Leisure Sports, Inc	99
22 Clever Fit	95
23 Mrs. Sporgy	92
24 Alex Fitness	76
25 Snap Fitness	72

644,000; and Alex Fitness saw its member base grow from 300,000 to 350,000. While others had more modest growth, none of those businesses that featured on the 2013 list lost any ground.

Many operators made both the facilities and membership top 25 lists.

## Money talks

The one number that trumps everything is revenue (see Figure 3), and in 2014 not one of the Global 25 had flat or reduced earnings. In fact, 15 of the top 25 experienced revenue growth of 10 per cent or more.

Topping the percentage growth charts were: Pump Spirit, whose revenue grew from US\$4m to US\$7m (+75 per cent); Orangetheory, which grew from US\$7m to US\$11m (+57 per cent); and Go Fit Portugal, whose revenues increased from US\$36m to US\$53m (+47 per cent).

Larger, more established players also saw double-digit growth. BioRitmo/SmartFit's revenues jumped from US\$150m to US\$210m (+40 per cent); Planet Fitness' numbers rose from US\$211m to US\$280m (+33 per cent); and Anytime Fitness went from US\$799m to US\$967m (+21 per cent). 2014 was a good year indeed! ●

## Want to read more?

The IHRSA Global 25 article is available in full at [ihrsa.org/cbi](http://ihrsa.org/cbi)

The 2015 IHRSA Global Report is available to IHRSA members (US\$74.95) and non-members (US\$149.95) – visit [ihrsa.org/ihrsa-global-report](http://ihrsa.org/ihrsa-global-report)



# RHETORIC INTO ACTION

New ukactive chair, Baroness  
Tanni Grey-Thompson, has  
sent a letter to every MP



ukactive executive  
director Steven  
Ward outlines  
the organisation's  
campaign to

get Parliament active

**A**s part of our campaign to engage more MPs on the growing issue of inactivity in the UK, we sent out letters and pledge cards to all 651 MPs as they were welcomed into the new Parliament in May. "They can just pop their responses into my office." With that came yet another validation of why Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson was a great choice to be the new chair of ukactive.

## Five minutes or five days

The letter, sent from Grey-Thompson, has called on MPs to help turn the tide of physical inactivity and ensure they act to get more people moving in their constituency. Backed up by powerful 'pledge cards' carrying supportive quotes from the Prime Minister and the Shadow Secretary of State for Health – and Labour leadership contender – Andy

Burnham, we've suggested different ways MPs can engage with ukactive, ranging from five minutes to five days of their time.

The pledges encourage MPs to meet with ukactive to find out the inactivity levels in their constituency and how they compare nationally. There's also an offer by ukactive to host roundtables in MPs' constituencies, bringing together activity providers, local authorities, brands and public health specialists to develop a physical activity plan that's localised and effective.

MPs have also been offered the opportunity to sign up to ukactive's weekly Parliamentary update, which highlights any matters related to activity and health that have been discussed in both the House of Commons and House of Lords; Grey-Thompson has also called for the establishment of a permanent Parliamentary Commission that will explore what legislative action could be taken to reduce inactivity levels over the course of the Parliament.

As part of the campaign, with so many new MPs giving the place a youthful and energetic feel, we're trying to get in on the act by inviting MPs to join our 'Move for your Seat' campaign, which aims to find fun and innovative ways to raise heart rates across Westminster in the run-up to National Fitness Day in September.

## A positive start

Getting off on the front foot with the new Parliament is crucial: we've set an internal objective to make this the Parliament that turns rhetoric into action on tackling inactivity. We've seen great progress over the years, not least the landmark Health Select Committee report in March 2015 in which the then chair of the committee, Dr Sarah Wollaston MP, called on medical professionals to harness the "extraordinary benefits of exercise in improving physical and mental health".

However, there's much more to be done to build activity into treatment and preventative health strategies. We also know we need to change the language of the debate to recognise inactivity as a top-tier public health priority. The focus on obesity promoted by both Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt and NHS CEO Simon Stevens, while valuable, often overlooks the issue that inactivity itself is a killer, irrespective of weight.

Inactivity is a problem that isn't going to go away, and the sustainability of the NHS is at risk if we don't devote resources into evidence-based programmes, research and development to tackle it. MPs have a huge role to play in addressing this, both in their constituencies and in Westminster. ●

# Diary

## JULY

### 9-10 | FitPro Live

Venue ExCeL, London, UK

#### Summary

Targeting personal trainers, instructors and fitness fanatics alike, this convention and trade show offers product demos and group workouts, as well as masterclasses and seminars from top presenters. The event will be preceded by a one-day Meeting of the Minds event on 8 July – an invite-only event for the top trainers from each health club group. A Zumba festival will take place on 10-11 July.

Web [www.fitpro.com/live15](http://www.fitpro.com/live15)

### 10-12 | GoFit

Venue Surrey Sports Park, UK

#### Summary

A family-focused sports event that fitness facilities can get involved in. Activities on offer will include dance, fitness, sport and health-based pursuits. Visitors can also take advantage of free coaching sessions, and take part in challenges and team events.

Web [www.gofest.co.uk](http://www.gofest.co.uk)

### 13-16 | 11th Annual International Conference on Kinesiology and Exercise Sciences

Venue Athens, Greece

#### Summary

Organised by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER) in conjunction with the Pan-Hellenic Association of Sport Economists & Managers (PASEM), this conference is designed to bring together scholars and students from a wide range of applied and integrated health sciences.

Web [www.atiner.gr](http://www.atiner.gr)

WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/WAVE BREAK MEDIA



July will see FitPro Live in London and the IDEA World Fitness Convention in LA

### 15-19 | IDEA World Fitness Convention

Venue Los Angeles, California, US

#### Summary

Claimed to be the world's largest, longest-running international fitness convention, this event features a programme of educational sessions from industry-best presenters.

Web [www.idealife.com/world](http://www.idealife.com/world)

### 16-18 | Health+Fitness Business Expo & Interbike Expo

Venue Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, US

#### Summary

Since 1997, this event has brought manufacturers, suppliers, retailers, buyers, press, influencers and fitness professionals together for business.

Web [www.healthandfitnessbiz.com](http://www.healthandfitnessbiz.com)

## SEPTEMBER

### 9 | National Fitness Day

Venue UK-wide

#### Summary

Following 2014's inaugural event, National Fitness Day 2015 will see fitness providers across the UK open their doors for free to allow the public to try out a range of fitness activities.

Web [www.nationalfitnessday.com](http://www.nationalfitnessday.com)

### 17-19 | 16th Annual IHRSA / Fitness Brasil Latin American Conference & Trade Show

Venue Transamerica Expo Center, São Paulo, Brazil

#### Summary

A key health and wellness event for Latin America, featuring three days of seminars, networking opportunities and a trade show with 130 exhibitors.

Web [www.ihrsa.org/fitness-brasil](http://www.ihrsa.org/fitness-brasil)



**WaterRower**

THE ULTIMATE ROWING SIMULATOR

[www.waterrower.co.uk](http://www.waterrower.co.uk)

# Home and Away

**The ability to buy online has become a necessity for many consumers. Gladstone looks at how gym memberships are offered in this environment**

Over the past two decades the rise of the internet has changed the way we spend our money. And although it's now 21 years since the first web-based transaction took place, our appetite for online shopping shows no sign of waning – according to the Office for National Statistics, almost three-quarters (74 per cent) of British adults bought goods or services online last year.

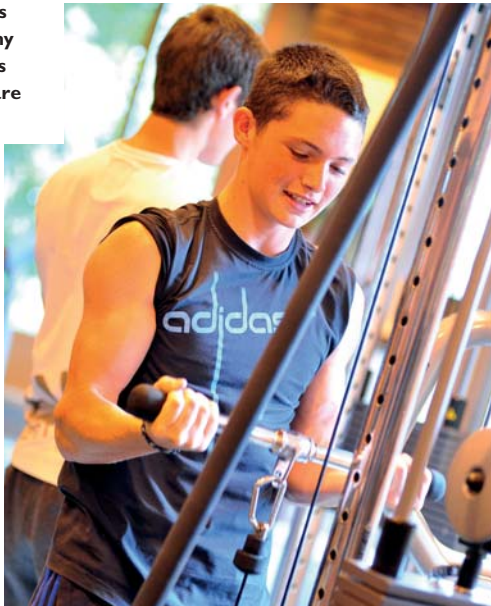
The message is simple: whatever today's consumers need – clothes, music, groceries, concert tickets, flights – they expect to be able to buy it online. And thanks to groundbreaking software products such as Gladstone Health and Leisure's Join@Home, they can now add gym memberships to their online shopping baskets too.

## Personalised experience

Since its launch three years ago, Join@Home has revolutionised membership sales in gyms and leisure centres across the country by allowing customers to sign up from the comfort of their own home (or indeed anywhere) at a time and pace which suits them. As well as being more convenient for the customer, the product has the added bonus of easing pressure on the in-house sales team, while also boosting sales and potentially cutting costs.

The flexible design delivers a quick and user-friendly process for people to either purchase memberships upfront or sign up to a direct debit. Customers can even simply register their details for pay-as-you-go, in order to benefit from online bookings.

Nor is Join@Home just a great way to attract new business: it also offers operators an easy way to manage membership renewals and upgrades for existing customers.



**Younger consumers, in particular, are comfortable buying most things online**

The software can be adapted to offer a personalised customer experience, look and feel that blends seamlessly with each operator's website, while the fully responsive design means it works well and looks great on both mobiles and tablets – making it ideal for use with Gladstone's smartphone app, MobilePro.

And although Join@Home is primarily for remote use, it can also be made available on site, meaning that even customers who come in to sign up can use it. The result? Even more reception time is freed up for customer care.

"The internet is now so prevalent in our everyday lives that many people

expect to be able to run their lives online 24/7," says Tom Withers, sales and marketing director for Gladstone.

"With this in mind it's imperative we offer our clients technologically advanced products, such as Join@Home, that allow their customers to do this.

"But it's not only prospective members that benefit from Join@Home. By providing an additional sales channel that reduces rather than increases pressure on staff, the product has the potential to make a significant contribution to the success of any gym or leisure centre business, in terms of both customer service and the bottom line."

**“Every online transaction  
is one less phone call or  
reception visit customers  
have to make”**

**Frances Durkan,  
data and information officer,  
Calderdale Council**

**A**fter the opening of our two newest sites four years ago, the membership population at our five leisure centres doubled, but our staff numbers did not. As a result our leisure centres were soon overwhelmed by demand at reception, both in person and by phone and email, leaving some of our customers unsatisfied with the response that they got from us. Gladstone's Join@Home – along with its online booking system Connect – has provided us with a great, cost-effective way of dealing with this challenge.

Since introducing these solutions two years ago, we haven't looked back. Both systems take care of run-of-the-mill transactions that would otherwise tie up valuable reception time, enabling our staff to concentrate on more complex enquiries and customer care. It's also much better for our customers, as every online transaction is one less phone call or reception visit they have to make. It can all be done from the comfort of their own home or during their work commute, and at any time of day – there's no more standing in line or listening to the phone ring.

From an administration point of view, both systems are really straightforward: for example, price fixes, promotions and dealing with unpaid transactions are all more or less self-running once set up. The results speak for themselves. Just looking at Join@Home, from 20 May 2013 to 30 April 2015 we sold 1,803 memberships through the system, and about 25 per cent of our monthly membership sales now go through online



Since implementing Gladstone's Join@Home, online sales of Calderdale's memberships have grown to 25 per cent of total sales



**“Our prospective customers expected us to offer  
an online sign-up process”**

**Debbie Reay, memberships officer, Brio Leisure**

**W**hen Join@Home became available, we were very keen to adopt it as we could immediately see its potential to ease the pressure on our reception staff, enabling them to better focus their time and energies on upselling and dealing with customer queries.

It was also important for meeting the needs of our prospective

customers, who increasingly expected us to offer an online sign-up process, just like some of our competitors.

To ensure a seamless customer experience, our web designers 'skinned' the Join@Home pages so they completely blended into our own website, and we introduced the product on 26 February 2014 at all 10 of our membership-based sites. We

are very pleased with the results: within 12 months of launching the product roughly 12 per cent of all new membership sales were being made online, and by May of this year 929 people had signed up via Join@Home.

We're now investigating the possibility of installing computers in our public areas so customers who wish to do so can join online in-club.



# Township YOGI



Project director Elle Matthews

## What is the Township Yogi Project?

It's a non-profit organisation that we launched in February 2013, where we go into South African townships, set up grassroots yoga studios and offer free yoga classes to people living there.

Classes are run by volunteer yoga teachers who give up their time to teach on our project, but we also identify and train unemployed people from within the townships to become qualified yoga teachers. Once qualified, they're able to take over the classes and teach their own communities, with classes generally running once or twice a week in each location.

Kate Cracknell talks to Elle Matthews, director of the Township Yogi Project – an initiative that takes yoga to the townships of South Africa in a bid to spread the calm and wellbeing that yoga can bring

The project started in the Inanda and KwaMashu townships near Durban, and has continued growing in both areas, as well as expanding into a number of other townships in that area. We also started up in Johannesburg in April and will be offering classes in Cape Town soon.

## Why did you want to do this?

I'd been a practitioner of yoga for a few years, but in 2012 I went on a yoga retreat to Thailand and it changed my life. I could feel the effects on my mind, body and spirit. When I returned home to South Africa, I found myself completely focused on the suffering of



The project aims to spread the peace of yoga into tense township communities

people all around me. I could see the desperation of people sitting on the curb as I drove past, hoping for a job. Or the despair of people I knew who lived in the townships and were victims of crime and violence, or living with the effects of HIV/Aids. I had a deep knowing that they needed to do yoga. I can't explain it – it was just something I was sure of.

At the time I didn't have any great dreams about taking yoga into townships throughout South Africa. Even if I only reached a few people, I wanted to be able to share the physical, emotional and spiritual tools that yoga offers, giving people a way of coping with the

suffering and helping them manage their lives in the townships in a better way. It's a tough, tense, stressful existence and I just wanted them to know the kind of peace I'd experienced – even if just for one hour a week.

#### Can anyone attend your classes?

Absolutely. We have kids attending from as young as three, right up to 'gogos' – elderly women who arrive at class leaning on their canes for support. Everyone and anyone is welcome and classes are free. We just ask them to clean the mats afterwards – or sometimes they'll sing a special song for the teacher – just as an exchange of energy.

We provide basic yoga clothing for students – many of them don't have more than two or three items of clothing to wear, and none of it's appropriate for yoga – so nobody misses out.

Word of mouth plays a big part in getting people involved. People walk past a hall, see the class happening and ask about it. Many people who attend also come with friends the next week. We put up posters and hand out flyers the week before a new class is about to begin, and if we're targeting a new group of people who don't even know what yoga is, one of the township teachers will come with us when we meet them. They'll show them a few postures and explain the ▶

## THE BENEFITS OF YOGA

### How can yoga help those living with HIV/Aids?

International studies have shown that yoga benefits people with TB and HIV in a number of ways.

Living with HIV and Aids is stressful, and yoga can greatly assist with stress reduction, as well as helping ease some symptoms and side-effects of HIV medication including joint pain and digestive problems.

Other studies have shown yoga can improve mental health, body image, and even help prevent the spread of the virus by encouraging a more proactive approach to care and treatment.

In terms of TB, yoga is all about breathing and improving lung capacity. Numerous studies have shown the benefits of yoga in treating people with TB.

### Any other benefits of yoga for these communities?

Studies have shown a significant and lasting effect of meditation on drug and alcohol abuse. Many addictions begin as coping mechanisms, or ways of filling a spiritual void. When you replace this with yoga, people in treatment for addiction can learn to deal with their emotions and environment in healthier ways.

Yoga also shows potential as a treatment for drug addiction through demonstrated anti-depressant and stress reduction effects. The intense breathing patterns of yoga release the body's natural pleasure-producing endorphins, which helps suppress addictive behaviours while restoring the brain's dopamine functions to healthier levels.

► benefits of yoga in their own language, so they understand what it's all about.

### Are there any other aspects to the project besides yoga?

We've found that other needs have come out of the yoga classes – like people wanting to eat more healthily, but not knowing how to given their dire financial situations. We've gone into the townships and given classes on cooking healthy food on small budgets – including encouraging people to grow their own vegetables and become self-sustaining.

### How have you funded the Township Yogi project?

Completely through donations, although hopefully we'll soon be able to start tapping into some international foundations and funding organisations that focus on the social issues we're trying to help alleviate.

All administration work is done voluntarily and Township Yogi directors aren't paid, so everything goes directly to the people of the townships who benefit from the project. The only 'salaries' paid are the small stipends given to township



Basic yoga clothing is provided for the students, as many of them only own a few items of clothing – none suitable for yoga



The main reason the Township Yogi Project works is that it's brought into the heart of the townships, says Matthews

yoga teachers once they qualify and start teaching their communities. They get R100 a class (about £6).

At the moment we need about R20,000 (£1,200) a month to set up new classes, pay township teachers and train more township students to become qualified yoga teachers. One of our biggest costs is paying for these training courses – they do a full 200-hour training course, which takes about six months, and are SETA registered when they complete it. This cost will only grow as we expand into more provinces and more teachers are qualified, but in terms of international funding it's a sustainable project.

#### **I believe there's also a film being made?**

My husband and I are filmmakers and we could see the potential of amazing stories coming out of the Township Yogi Project. We therefore decided, right at the very beginning, to make a film about it – a documentary that follows the journey of five people in the Inanda

“  
**We have kids attending from as young as three, right up to 'gogos' – elderly women who arrive at class leaning on their canes for support**  
”

township – as a way to build awareness and raise funds to sustain expansion into the whole of South Africa.

We started filming from the very first class in 2013. The five participants are

people living in townships and attending yoga classes; some have trained to become Township Yogi teachers. They were chosen because of their personal stories, their life journeys and their commitment to yoga.

In addition to its primary goal of helping with fundraising, we also hope the film will show the power that yoga has to help change lives – hopefully making some government departments sit up and take notice of yoga as a potential tool to help communities.

#### **Won't people lose interest once the cameras have gone?**

Nobody notices the film cameras when they're sweating in a yoga class, I promise you! The classes have been going for two years now and we film the odd session once every four or five months. We haven't even filmed some of the schools where the teachers are teaching 60–70 kids at a time. So people are doing yoga because they want to, and they're continuing because they love the benefits they get from it. ►

“

**When people tell us how they've changed since doing yoga, and so do their families, we know we're achieving what we set out to achieve**

”

► **Is your focus mainly on individuals or the broader township community?**

At the beginning I saw individual benefits for people – a way of them coping with the social issues in townships. But then I started seeing the potential for yoga to change communities through a ripple effect: the positive effects filtering from individuals into neighbourhoods and then into broader communities. It was just an idea at the time – a belief that this could happen.

**And has it?**

I'd rather not go into that right now, as the documentary is just being finalised. You'll be able to see all the results for yourself soon!

That said, we haven't tried to quantify results, although we are now running formal research across a couple of social areas. So far we're continuing with the

project because people tell us how yoga is helping them change their lives for the better, or because we see small changes happening in communities.

We're not saying it's directly attributable to yoga, but when people tell us how they've changed since doing yoga, and so do their families, then we know we're achieving what we set out to achieve with the project.

**What are your plans for Township Yogi in the future?**

We'll continue with the formula we have: identifying townships where social issues like poverty, crime, violence, unemployment, drug abuse and HIV/Aids are rife. And then we'll find venues in these areas where we can roll out Township Yogi Project classes: set these up, hand them over to township teachers who qualify through the Township Yogi Project

teacher training, and then move on to the next venue.

We're also looking at establishing a dedicated yoga centre in Inanda, for which we'll need to raise funds for the building, ongoing maintenance and operation. But this is a long-term project and we need to reach a lot more provinces and townships before we get there. For now, we're focused on setting up as many yoga classes as possible, because the demand and need is so great. We're teaching at schools, in community and church halls, and even in the yards of township teachers.

In fact, we're in the process of setting up an outdoor yoga studio in the front yard of one of our township teachers, and are fundraising to get the money needed to concrete the yard – it's just dirt at the moment. He teaches yoga to all the kids in the neighbourhood, trying to keep them off the streets and away



Township yoga teachers undergo a full 200-hour yoga training course and receive a small stipend once they start teaching





Yoga can help improve mental health, and international studies have shown its benefits for those living with HIV or TB

“ Ten years from now, I'd love to see yoga happening regularly in every township in South Africa and its neighbouring countries. That would be amazing ”

from drugs, so an outdoor yoga studio at his house will be a wonderful thing for that community.

#### **What can health club operators learn from your experience?**

The main reason the Township Yogi Project works is that yoga is brought into the heart of the townships. If more health clubs went out into their communities, they would engage people who, after a few sessions, might be more inclined to make the effort to attend classes at the clubs.

It's also about making things accessible and relevant. When our volunteer teachers take people through the yoga poses, they often relate them to activities people do in their everyday lives. For example, Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend) is something women working in the fields do all the time, so

teachers can teach this pose by referring them to what they do all the time – but showing them how to do it correctly.

#### **Where would you like to see the Township Yogi project in the short and longer term?**

One of the principles we've always followed for the Township Yogi Project is letting things happen naturally: we try not to be too prescriptive, letting the growth of the project happen organically.

But ideally, a year from now, I hope the Township Yogi Project will be well-established in townships in major provinces in South Africa, and that we're constantly training new yoga teachers from within the townships, giving them a new skill and the chance of employment.

Five years from now, I hope the Township Yogi Project will be running in countries bordering South Africa, and

that the power of yoga will be spreading throughout southern Africa. We're already looking at Namibia as the next country into which we'd like to expand.

Ten years from now, I'd love to see yoga happening regularly in every township in South Africa and its neighbouring countries. That would be amazing.

#### **Would it work outside Africa?**

Definitely. It's a simple principle and one that can work anywhere. There are similar townships in countries all over Africa, as well as in South America and many other Third World countries, which would certainly benefit from a similar model.

Wherever we take the Township Yogi Project in the future, I hope to be able to impact families, neighbourhoods and broader communities and bring about lasting, positive change. ●

# WHAT DO 1 MILLION MEMBERS SAY?

HOW CAN MEMBER  
FEEDBACK BE  
GATHERED AND USED  
BY THE FITNESS  
INDUSTRY TO REFINE  
ITS OFFERING? JON  
NASTA REPORTS

Xercise4Less has seen  
a 60% rise in NPS by  
acting on feedback



Member feedback helps Xercise4Less stay true to its brand identity

Let's be clear about the value of great customer service. As Sam Walton, founder of Walmart, once said: "There is only one boss. The customer. And she can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending her money somewhere else."

If you're in the camp that still regards customer service as a cost, not an investment, then it's probably better to flick on to the next article.

But if you appreciate the importance of creating a customer-centric business – where you encourage feedback to understand customers' needs, and then strive to meet those needs on a daily basis – then read on.

### The value of feedback

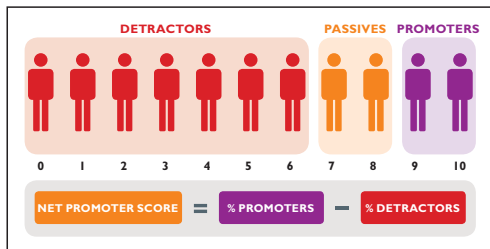
Creating a steady flow of feedback allows you as a fitness operator to engage with customers and listen to them in a structured, methodical way.

It allows you to track and measure customer satisfaction, and helps you quickly respond to customer issues.

Without a steady stream of actionable customer feedback, we don't know what to change to make our industry and our businesses better.

Sharing feedback with your team, to keep them informed, means they can take ownership of customer satisfaction and retention. And publicly sharing feedback also pays dividends: leveraging social media can help happy customers to spread the word about your brand.

FIGURE 1 NET PROMOTER SCORE CATEGORIES



### One million members

So what feedback are members giving to their health clubs, and what can operators learn from this?

At the IHRSA International Convention & Trade Show in March, Listen360 presented the findings of its analysis of feedback from over one million members (a total of 1.6 million comments) – the largest such study ever carried out in the fitness industry.

The one million individuals were members of over 2,000 different health clubs across 10 countries. An ongoing study, the data presented at

## Member feedback – why bother?

**“There is only one boss. The customer. And she can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending her money somewhere else.”**

**Sam Walton, founder, Walmart**

**“Our DNA is as a consumer company – for that individual customer who’s voting thumbs up or thumbs down. That’s who we think about. And we think our job is to take responsibility for the complete user experience. And if it’s not up to par, it’s our fault, plain and simple.”**

**The late Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple**

**“You can’t drag people from understanding to action. A customer isn’t actually at the last mile if you’re the one dragging her to the finish line.”**

**Thomas Barnett, chief analyst, Wikistrat**

FIGURE 2 TOP TERMS MENTIONED – PROS AND CONS

PROMOTER	DETRACTOR
Friendly staff	Too crowded/wait for equipment
Plenty of equipment	Broken equipment
Variety of classes/programmes	Dirty locker rooms and showers
Clean facility	Not enough variety in classes/class times
Good customer service	Too expensive

- IHRSA was collected between January 2014 and March 2015.

The members surveyed were simply asked the Net Promoter Score question: “On a score of 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend your health club to a friend or business associate?” – with a score of 0 meaning they were unlikely to do so, and 10 meaning ‘very likely’. The members could then be categorised as a detractor, passive or promoter based on their score (see Figure 1, p39). Clubs were then given their NPS score: the balance remaining after subtracting detractors from promoters – which could of course be a negative number.

The Net Promoter Score metric was designed to predict the likelihood of business growth. Experience validates this. In multi-location businesses, the locations registering the top 10 per cent of NPS scores have the highest growth; while the bottom 10 per cent experience little or no growth.

For the big-box clubs Listen360 analysed, the membership breakdown averaged 66 per cent promoters, 23 per cent passives and 11 per cent detractors, resulting in an average member experience NPS of 55 per cent.

With class-based businesses and studios factored in, the numbers are more like 70 per cent promoters, 20 per cent passives and 10 per cent detractors. Significantly higher than industry benchmarks published by IHRSA and other groups, this number reflects a community of fitness businesses with a strong commitment to delivering an exceptional member experience. They have not only implemented a system to measure member loyalty, but actively use the insights provided to direct their continuous improvement efforts.

### Data becomes insight

So how have they done this? The big question often asked about NPS is how to take this research to a level that will allow for operational insight. Whether they’re detractors, passives or promoters, which areas of your offering are your members talking about, what

are they happy with, where do they wish to see improvements?

This information needs to be uncovered as objectively as possible. With this in mind, Listen360 asks one follow-up question depending on the score given by the members.

Detractors – anyone who scored their likelihood of recommending their health club as 0–6 – are asked: “How did we disappoint you and what can we do to make it right?”

Passives, who scored their club 7–8, are asked: “What could we do to improve?” And promoters, who are asked: “What do you like about our services?”

The text from these member responses is then analysed, with the system identifying the words most regularly mentioned by members. This offers an insight into what clubs are doing well, what isn’t so good, and what members want.

### What do members talk about?

The top five terms referenced by both promoters and detractors in our million-member study can be seen in Figure 2. Aside from price, we can see it’s the same key words being talked about on both sides of the fence – cleanliness, availability of equipment, variety of classes. Your happy customers aren’t so hung up on price, because they believe they’re getting value for their money. For your detractors – your unhappy members – when they aren’t satisfied with what you’re offering, all of a sudden price becomes an issue.

Promoters are more concerned about location than price – if they like what you’re giving them, and it’s conveniently located, then they’ll deal with the price.

The great news is that there are many more positives being talked about by members than negatives, as evidenced by the NPS figures noted above.

Operators can take these objective measures and use them as the basis on which to take informed action, safe in the knowledge that these actions will improve the customer experience.



Variety of group exercise is a key point in many members' feedback

PHOTO: WWW.ISTOCK.COM/DEANMITCHELL

### Theory into practice

Xercise4Less began using the Listen360 programme in January 2014. Since then, the operator has received over 40,000 member feedback comments.

At the outset of the initiative, Xercise4Less' NPS score was sitting at 31 per cent. At this point, a decision was taken at boardroom level to set a KPI of responding to detractor feedback – with a phone call or a meeting – within 48 hours of the feedback being received; this KPI has since been reduced to 24 hours. Performance of this metric is monitored on management dashboards. The business has also introduced regular in-club 'meet the manager' evenings.

From a retention perspective, this approach to detractor feedback leads to a pre-emptive rather than a reactive cure: the club is given a clear and objective view of a member's concerns and is able to connect with the member and make the situation better before he/she has reached the stage of cancellation.

The board of Xercise4Less then set about looking into the aspects of their health clubs, and the service provided by their staff, that their members were talking about the most.

One of the top five most mentioned terms by detractors of Xercise4Less during the first three months of feedback was "water fountains". An

### Did you know that.....

- **80 per cent** of new business in the health and wellness industry comes from customer referrals
- The ROI of one customer saved can be **£600–£3,600** per year
- **92 per cent** of consumers value recommendations from family and friends above all other advertising
- **70 per cent** of consumers value online reviews as the second most trusted source of information about a brand, after recommendations from friends and family

audit of the numbers and positioning of water fountains was commissioned, and the evidence quickly showed that there was indeed work to be done to improve this provision. More fountains were fitted at a relatively low cost, the NPS score began to creep up, and the board began to feel they were on to something good.

Throughout the rest of the year, more actions were taken based solely ▶

**Book your advert on our website and be seen by over 29,000 buyers every month from as little as £240.**



**CALL THE SALES TEAM TODAY TO DISCUSS YOUR BOOKING**

**01462 431385**







PHOTO: WWW.ISTOCK.COM/ GLOBAL STOCK

- ▶ on the analysis of the top words being mentioned in the member feedback. Xercise4Less CEO Jon Wright says: "Hearing what our customers think helps us stay true to our brand identity."

Figure 3 shows the improvement of Xercise4Less' NPS over the last year.

Just shy of 20 per cent of a club's promoters will be happy to share their feedback on social media if asked to do so

### Harnessing positivity

The chain has also taken measures to use the positive feedback from members. One huge area of success has come from

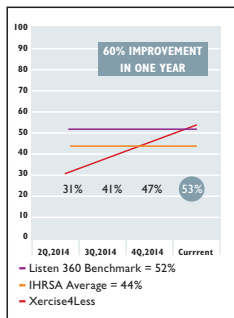
simply asking the members to share their positive opinions on either twitter or Facebook. This has resulted in over 4,000 testimonials about Xercise4Less being published by its members.

It should be noted that, throughout this study, just shy of 20 per cent of a club's promoters will be happy to share their feedback on social media if asked to do so. This figure will vary widely depending on your overall NPS score, how easy you make it for promoters to share feedback via social channels, and whether you create a special offer for them to share with friends. On average 9–10 per cent will share, but for brands with an attractive offer and lots of promoters, it can exceed 20 per cent.

'sell' your club for you. Aside from a little kudos and bragging rights, very little can be gained operationally from the score alone. We need to constantly measure the feedback, analyse it and then improve our services.

The evidence from over one million members is clear. Profitable, sustainable organic growth occurs most often when customers and employees enjoy their business relationship with a company and willingly sing its praises to neighbours, friends and colleagues. ●

FIGURE 3 XERCISE4LESS 12-MONTH NPS



### Feedback into action

Remember, the key responsibility when gaining member feedback is that you use this to take action – whether that's to improve facilities, turn detractors into promoters, or to energise promoters to

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jon Nasta is MD of Retention Solutions, whose services include Listen360 and rewards scheme Perkvill.   
E: [jon@retentionsolutions.co.uk](mailto:jon@retentionsolutions.co.uk)   
W: [www.listen360.com](http://www.listen360.com) / [www.perkvill.com](http://www.perkvill.com)



ASHBOURNE  
MEMBERSHIP MANAGEMENT

Direct Debit collection service & integrated club software

# Are you a gym owner?

Relax... go

# All-inclusive<sup>+</sup> with Ashbourne

Direct Debit collections plus all the club software  
you need... ALL for one fixed fee per DD per month

collection<sup>+</sup> 

AND all this  
Club Software:

dashboard<sup>+</sup> 

ebooking<sup>+</sup> 

ACCESS<sup>+</sup> 

epos<sup>+</sup> 

ejoin<sup>+</sup> 

[www.ashbourne-memberships.co.uk](http://www.ashbourne-memberships.co.uk) 0871 271 2088

NO HIDDEN  
EXTRAS!

## PROGRESSION AND A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT KEEPS EXERCISERS COMING BACK

It's about more than equipment; Life Fitness can help you to make your facility unique.

The Life Fitness Journey creates an engaging environment where exercisers want to progress and reach their goals.

 LIFE FITNESS  
journey

Life@LifeFitness.com  
[www.lifefitness.co.uk](http://www.lifefitness.co.uk) | 01353 666017

©2015 Life Fitness, a division of Brunswick Corporation. All rights reserved.  
Life Fitness is a registered trademark of Brunswick Corporation.

*LifeFitness*

WHAT WE LIVE FOR

# PAYING FOR EXPERTISE



The 1Rebel brand has been set up as an industry disruptor and knows its target 'tribe'

Ray Algar reports on the rise of the small, perfectly-formed studio

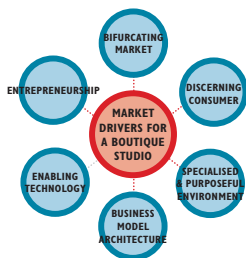
It's interesting how the narrative of an industry ebbs and flows. Ten years ago, media outlets were brimming with news of how brands such as LA fitness and Fitness First were bringing their conveniently located, affordably priced clubs to more consumers. BC Partners had acquired Fitness First for an enterprise value (the takeover price including a company's debts, less any cash held on account) of US\$1.5bn, and its new owners were excited about building on

its base of 1.1 million members through its 'value for money' clubs.

Soon after this deal, low-cost gyms began emerging offering a narrower, stripped-back fitness experience at monthly fees that were more than 50 per cent lower than the national average price. An industry that once predominantly served the country's more affluent households was evolving into something that was far more open and democratic.

In order to provide remarkably low monthly fees, gyms were super-sized, migrated to a self-service 24-hour operating model, and powered by abundant technology to drive down costs. They captivated the interest of consumers and journalists who found them refreshingly simple to understand.

FIGURE 1  
MARKET DRIVERS FOR A BOUTIQUE STUDIO





Athlete Lab uses real bikes and puts a strong emphasis on expert coaching

Now the industry is turning again and embracing the power of the group, building a stronger sense of community and fostering a tribal following by creating signature fitness experiences that feel more authentic. Authentic because the 'pact' between the studio and customer, in my experience, seems clearer – you're here because we're a specialist and appreciate the effort required to reach your desired outcome. These are purposeful places with serious work to be undertaken.

### A mature industry

The UK commercial health and fitness sector has evolved significantly since being kickstarted by David Lloyd with his first club in Heston, Middlesex, in 1982. These early private sector clubs whetted the appetite of the general public, which in turn encouraged new entrants. In 2015, however, the UK private health club sector is mature. There are high levels of merger, acquisition and restructuring activity. Competition is intensifying and private sector membership subscription income for 2010–2014 grew at an annual average rate of just 0.1 per cent – slower than annualised gross domestic product (GDP) – as it becomes more challenging for many operators to raise prices.

Given this competitive backdrop, you would assume the predominant conversation among gym consumers would be "how little I pay". But in fact for a growing minority it's becoming "how much I pay", with a 45-minute boutique fitness studio class potentially costing more than one month's membership at a low-cost gym. So what are these new specialist studios, and what's driving this trend?

### Defining a studio

Studios are known by many names – ranging from 'microgyms' to 'boutiques' to 'stores' – but regardless of the terminology, I believe they possess the following core characteristics:

- Intimate scale
- Narrow programme/activity offer
- Expert and guided instruction
- Schedule-driven
- Nurturing environment
- Group-powered
- Shared common interest
- Compelling mission

## "Shut up legs!"

Jens Voigt – 2x Tour de France stage winner



**"THE STUDIO'S LONG-TERM SUCCESS IS DEPENDENT ON IT DEVELOPING A DEEP EXPERTISE THAT'S DIFFICULT FOR OTHERS TO IMITATE"**

Many studios are founded by enthusiastic individuals with a compelling everyday mission to share their deep passion for a programme or activity. For example, when Hilary Gilbert moved to London from the United States she couldn't find indoor cycling classes as good as the ones she had experienced in New York, so she decided to create her own studio and BOOM Cycle was born.

Being small in scale, studios need to operate efficiently and are therefore driven by scheduled classes using expert instructors who optimise the experience for all participants. The support and encouragement of others is transmitted through the class, bonded by a shared common interest to create a nurturing environment. It's a powerful recipe that can be significantly different

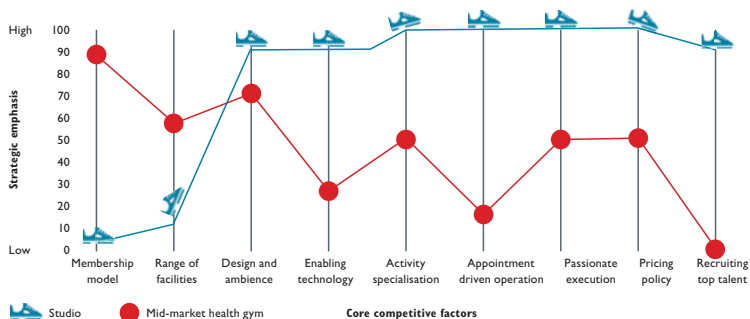
from a mainstream gym experience, and therefore very compelling from a customer perspective.

### Popularity

I see six key factors that are driving the popularity of boutique fitness studios (see Figure 1, p44), which I discuss in my new report – *2015 UK boutique fitness studio report: A strategic investigation into an exciting growth segment*.

Meanwhile Figure 2 (p46) shows the distinctive way a studio will create value for its customers. It shows nine core factors on which a typical mid-market club traditionally competes. The red line illustrates the gym and the emphasis placed on each of these nine factors. A higher score means the club invests more to provide extra to members. ▶

FIGURE 2 STRATEGY CANVAS FOR A STUDIO VS MID-MARKET HEALTH CLUB



The mid-market club invests in a range of facilities and programmes, built on the traditional membership model. It aspires to be a competent and consistent generalist.

The strategic profile for a studio is very different. It chooses to eliminate the membership model, which it believes to be unnecessary in forging engagement with customers. The range of facilities is reduced so that all peripheral areas and their associated costs are removed from the business.

Next, it raises its strategic emphasis in six factors on which the studio wishes to build its reputation. First, more resources are invested in design, because the studio aspires to create a distinctive brand image – one that communicates to customers that they're stepping into an environment that looks and feels more retail store than gym.

The use of enabling technologies is increased, providing customers with a greater sense of autonomy that's very empowering – check online for class availability, select a preferred bike or place in a class, book, pay and charge ancillary items such as rental items, food and water to a stored payment card, creating a simple, cashless experience.

Activity specialisation is critical, because the studio's long-term success is dependent on it developing a deep expertise that's difficult for others in the industry to imitate.

Unlike most gyms, the studio is appointment-driven, which drives efficiency but also forms part of its purposeful environment – customers are here to experience some meaningful activity. Passionate execution is driven from the reality that whether someone returns is based on their next hour's experience – there's no safety net from selling minimum-term memberships.

Finally, studios have created a new competitive factor around the recruitment of top talent, recognising that the instructor is a vital component in creating the difference between a mediocre and a remarkable experience. Many top studio instructors have 'rock star status' both in studio and online, having stretched themselves to reach the top of their profession (commanding higher fees or salaries).

The result is that a very different strategic profile is created, which allows the studio to break free of low prices, discounts and year-round promotions. This is because it exudes a confidence in its ability to make a meaningful difference in the lives of its customers.

### Apply a neutral lens

Were you aware that, when a business comes along with a disruptive and novel consumer proposition, it can sometimes be left unchallenged for more than 10 years? Often this is because the 'lens' used to evaluate the disruptor is

clouded by assumptions and pre-existing bias. It has happened before in the UK fitness industry, when the first low-cost gyms arrived and were greeted by incumbent operators with ridicule and scepticism – "they are not viable", "they are unsafe" and "they will not be around for long". They were wrong.

This myopic thinking is unhelpful and commercially damaging; so much more intelligent to apply a neutral lens when assessing the emergence of boutique studios and other fitness concepts that are vying for the attention of consumers. You may not buy into or believe in the operating model, but the very least you must do is understand it. ●

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ray Algar is the managing director of Oxygen Consulting, a company that provides strategic business insights for organisations connected to the global health and fitness industry.



The 2015 UK Boutique Fitness Studio Report is a collaboration with Matrix Fitness UK, whose unconditional support was essential.

The full 43-page report can be purchased for £175 + VAT from: <http://bit.ly/BoutiqueReport>



## Boutique offerings

All studios allow 'pay as you train' access, with single class pricing shown in Table 1 below. Repeat visits are incentivised by packaging classes into bundles. Barry's Bootcamp, for example, has a 50-class package costing £700, equivalent to £14 per class (prices at April 2015). Some studios like Athlete Lab offer a membership as well as ride packages. 'Peloton membership', for example, costs £129 a month and offers unlimited rides, but does require an initial six-month commitment. David Lloyd's Orangetheory studios offer an unlimited studio session membership for £99 a month.

My report also includes an extended case study on SoulCycle, which I believe is an essential brand to understand for those with an interest in this sector, not least because it's demonstrating how to grow a brand (45 studios open as at June 2015) while retaining the essence of what makes a studio experience so remarkable. It exemplifies what many of the UK studio brands now need to prove, so they can also successfully scale from one or two studios into a credible network capable of extending beyond London and the south-east of England.



SoulCycle retains its 'remarkability' in spite of growing to 45 studios

TABLE 1 UK STUDIO BRANDS – MARKETING AND PRODUCT FEATURES

Brand name	Core brand communication message/theme	Core programmes	Single class pricing	Website
1Rebel	We are revolutionising London's fitness industry. With centrally located, no-contract 'pay-as-you-train' boutiques, we're ditching the tired model and building destinations, not just gyms	Ride, Reshape (circuit-style high-intensity class)	£20	irebel.co.uk
Athlete Lab	Real bikes, unreal results. Athlete Lab is a unique indoor experience. We provide real bikes (not spin bikes), in a convenient location, with the very best coaches	Indoor road bike experience	£30	athlete-lab.co.uk
Barry's Bootcamp	Our signature cardio and strength workouts can help burn 1,000 calories in just one hour in a music-filled environment where every class feels new, fun and exciting for all levels	High-intensity strength/ cardio workout	£20	barrysbootcamp.com
BOOM Cycle	A high energy, bike-based, music-focused fitness experience. Bike. Beats. BOOM!	Spin class	£16	boomcycle.co.uk
David Lloyd Studios	Take part in the most exciting progressive group training experience on the high street and feel the benefit of the latest Orangetheory® heart rate monitored interval training techniques	Orangetheory (treadmill, rowing and resistance workout)	£20	davidlloyd.co.uk/ club-finder/ aldgate-dl-studio
Edge Cycle	Putting FUN into indoor cycling, which is probably the best fitness workout in the world burning up to 1,000 calories a class	Spin class	£15	edgecycle.co.uk
Frame	The dance, fitness and holistic studio smack-bang in the middle of the greatest two little suburbs in the entire world: Shoreditch and Queen's Park. We created Frame because we believed getting fit should not be a chore	Dance, Fitness, Pilates, Yoga	£13	moveyourframe.com
Heartcore Fitness	It's not you, it's them. Heartcore's highly effective 55-minute classes in Dynamic Pilates, High-Intensity TRX (HIIT) and BARRE deliver optimal results that sculpt your physique in ways traditional exercise simply can't match	Barre, High-intensity TRX, Pilates	£27	heartcore.co.uk
Psycle	Psycle offers a high-intensity, low impact, head-to-toe workout on a bike	Spin class	£20	psyclondon.com
Speedflex	An alternative to the gym or a boot camp, Speedflex offers high-intensity circuit training sessions led by a personal trainer	High-intensity machine-based circuit	£30	speedflex.com

# EASY DOES IT

How can the latest technology be used to increase the amount of money people spend in health clubs? Abigail Harris asks the experts

**A**ccording to research from WorldPay, paying using fingerprint, palm and iris scanners is the most popular future technology choice for security-conscious shoppers. Half of all respondents said they would like to make biometric payments, far outweighing the popularity of mobile technology options.

Nevertheless, while one in five people have already made a payment through their smartphone, the research also found that 30 per cent would like to use PIN-based smartphone payments, 25 per cent like the ease of online wallets, and 23 per cent want SMS payments.

So what does this mean for the health and fitness sector, where everyone's still talking about paying from your wrist?

It's clear that the easier it is to pay, the more we seem to spend – just think Amazon or PayPal – and smartphone and wearable technology is not the only innovation suppliers and operators are harnessing to boost revenue. From Oyster card-style membership cards, through PayPal-style credit card auto billing and tokenisation, to à la carte fitness memberships – where biometrics enable members to pay for what they use – health clubs and leisure centres are deploying clever approaches to encourage members to splash out.

**Fresh Fitness in Denmark ▶  
links its RFID wristbands to  
members' bank accounts**





## Rasmus Ingerslev

Founder, Fresh Fitness  
Denmark / executive vice  
chair, Wexer Virtual

Today's consumers expect flexibility and ease of use. When we launched low-cost operation Fresh Fitness, we wanted to create a friction-free experience – and as part of that we created cashless payments in our vending machines. When members join, they receive an RFID-chip bracelet tied to their membership and hence their bank account: whatever they spend in the vending machines is deducted directly from their account, alongside their membership fee.

Put simply, no member can enter the club without their wristband, and with the wristband all products are readily available without having to queue behind someone enquiring about membership.

Applying this technology (provided by Gantner and Exerp), combined with continuous testing to ensure we had the right number of vending machines and product mix, made it possible to increase sales from vending machines to around 10 per cent of total revenue.

I enjoyed a similar 'ease of payment' experience in the US when testing Barry's Bootcamp. They've applied a seamless payment method whereby purchases are charged from your credit card, which they have on file, making your visit hassle-free and making it easier to spend more money. I have no doubt we'll see more of this tech development in general, as well as in our industry. Applied well, it will help drive revenue and profit for operators.



DiR's software allows users to have an 'à la carte' membership

## Ramon Canela

Founder and general manager, Clubs DiR

DiR's in-house IT team has developed a unique and pioneering software enabling us to create the first 'à la carte' gym in the world. Now more than 6,500 members at 13 of DiR's 17 clubs in Barcelona pay only for the services they use.

Members can still opt for a traditional all-inclusive membership, which ranges from €60–150 a month depending on which club they're a member of, access time, age of the member and so on.

Alternatively, at 13 of our 17 clubs, they can choose the 'à la carte' membership, which offers access to the fitness area and virtual classes for €25 a month, but which also enables them to add other individual services to their membership.

Our technology investment includes entry turnstiles that read the fingerprint and face of the user, as well as touchscreens to hire additional services; these services are paid for directly from members' bank accounts.

The 'à la carte' membership starts at €25, with 35 additional services on offer including peak time access to the clubs, changing room access and towel hire, group activities with an instructor, the swimming pool, solarium and spa pool. Additional services vary in price from €2–€11

depending on the length of the hire, and members can modify their choices at any time. Average membership across the group is now €46 a month.

If consumers can choose 'à la carte' in a restaurant or when choosing accessories for a new car, why shouldn't they with their fitness offering? DiR has made it possible and it's enabled us to gain new customers, as well as retaining existing members: whatever level of package they buy in to, they're getting good value for money, because they're paying for the services they really want.



Ramon Canela

## Bryan O'Rourke

CEO, Fitness Industry Technology Council



Mobile payments like Apple Pay and Google Wallet greatly increase impulse spend



Bryan O'Rourke



The era of data-driven health coaching is emerging

A plethora of technologies will revolutionise fitness and the health club industry and increase revenues per member through convenience, customisation and new services. Using mobile capabilities, delivering services via technology inside and outside the club, and implementing club-wide networked fitness are the top three.

Mobile wallets like Apple Pay and Google Wallet are becoming mainstream. Whether your members are booking and paying for a training session or ordering a smoothie, the ease of mobile transactions to enhance impulse buying and convenient transactions will be a great opportunity.

A number of technology platforms now provide on-demand health support and services. With data from wearables, video streaming

and the emergence of AI (artificial intelligence) apps, the era of health coaching is emerging – one example that integrates in-club engagement and outside activity. A host of new revenue streams will be created through such programmes that service clients in more convenient and effective ways to help them achieve their health goals.

Finally, the era for big data is approaching. Deeper insights into member data will enable clubs to personalise experiences and create new opportunities to service clients, improve retention and create new revenues. This will require the networking of all equipment, the installation of sensors – beacons – and tracking technologies like geolocation, which will all collect data and provide true insights into individual customer behaviours, needs and wants.

## Mario Morger

Business development manager,  
GANTNER Electronics



Modern health clubs use technology to create an environment that allows members to conduct their workout as conveniently as possible – fast-track smartcard access, networked fitness equipment that recognises members when they log on, and so on.

In the past, operators relied heavily on reception staff and personal trainers to boost their revenues, as personal contact was the key to success. Today, however, we spend differently from the way we did 50 or even five years ago – and the difference starts with the way we use and trust technology.

When members upload cash onto their smart membership card, they can easily spend this money throughout the club – in a café, at a drinks station or on a personal training session. In addition to making it easy to spend money, keeping it simple and safe also eliminates problems of money handling in a facility.

Most importantly, operators should reward members for using their cashless payment system. Give them 10 per cent discount on all products and services for uploading £50 onto their membership card. In reality, rather than costing money, it will encourage spending and reduce operational costs. ▶

## Increase your revenue with GANTNER's NFC cashless payment system



Cashless payment is the way of the future. Just imagine customers conveniently purchasing goods and services with a GANTNER NFC card, wristband or mobile phone! No need to carry cash or credit cards!

The GANTNER cashless payment system has integration with the world's largest software companies and can be pre-loaded or integrated into a facilities billing system.

### Benefits

- Increased revenue, resulting from ease spending
- Complete transparency of every transaction
- Reduced money handling due to automation

GANTNER Electronics Ltd.  
T +44 1245 69 75 88  
info-uk@gantner.com | www.gantner.co.uk

**Gantner**  
technologies

## Direct Debits with a Personal Touch

### Keeping customers for longer can be as easy as DFC.

- Fully Managed Service for efficiently collecting Direct Debits.
- Online joining and API integration to member management systems.
- Transparent service, with clear pricing and no hidden extras.
- Improves your relationship with customers so they stay longer.
- Integrated Software Solutions.

At DFC we do things differently. We use the latest technology, complemented by a belief in total transparency, to efficiently collect Direct Debit payments for thousands of happy clients - leaving them free to manage their core business. With DFC as your partner, you have a powerful resource with a personal touch.



"I highly recommend DFC - if you do not have 'online joining', do it now. It is the best thing I ever did."

Call us to arrange an informal chat about your DD collection needs on 01908 422 000 or find out more at [www.ddifferent.co.uk](http://www.ddifferent.co.uk)

**DFC**

Bespoke Direct Debit Services





## Guenther Poellabauer

MD, TAC



Use digital signage in your club to advertise special offers



Our digital signage promotes available appointments across the facility, acting as an easy marketing solution to increase sales. By highlighting things like last-minute availability of PT sessions or a discount on a yoga class, customers are more likely to book on the spot. In-house marketing doesn't get much easier than that.

When purchasing products or services, cash isn't needed any more. Customers can easily pay for anything – from a Power Plate class to drinks from a vending

machine – directly through their guest/member profile, using the payment method they're most comfortable with – credit card, direct debit, PayPal and so on. This makes consuming in club easier and faster – and therefore more likely – than ever before.

And because all bookings and consumptions are saved in the individual guest profile, you know exactly what your customer wants – so you can ensure your offering reflects this, again helping form a virtuous circle of increased spending.

## Tom Withers

Sales and marketing director, Gladstone Health & Leisure

The industry's main focus is to catch up with other retailers by enhancing customer experience in self-service, driving behaviour towards this method. But a rapidly evolving payment market leads to challenges. Customers expect the options to reflect their preferred payment method, as well as being quick and secure. Meanwhile the operator wants a secure, reliable solution that's cost-efficient in terms of transactional costs and administration overheads.

With Gladstone's pre-authorised card service, the member chooses which card or bank/PayPal account their ongoing payments are taken from and can transact through any



Gladstone customer-facing product – such as join online, book online, tickets online and the mobile app – with a single 'click to pay'. This makes it easier for them to make purchases, and evidence shows this encourages additional spend.

No card details are stored by Gladstone or the health club, so the customer knows their card details are safe and the transaction secure. There's peace of mind for operators too, with set transactional costs.

With new payment options such as Apple Pay becoming ingrained in everyday life, customers are becoming comfortable with more choices at checkout.

## Greg Wookey

Senior VP of payments, MINDBODY

Payment technologies are evolving to meet the needs of an increasingly mobile society. Consumers expect the freedom to purchase memberships and packages or book and pay for classes anywhere, any time.

Businesses with integrated payment processing can provide increased customer convenience while also improving the back-end experience for staff – they can accept credit cards online at the front desk or on-the-go. Meanwhile auto-billing capabilities for packages and memberships can help

cultivate long-term customer relationships, moving the customer beyond a one-time drop-in experience and reducing the hassle of remembering payments.

Whether for auto-renewals of membership or the booking of classes, the entire customer payment experience becomes more efficient. Credit cards can be stored securely in client profiles, enabling customers to make bookings and purchases regardless of their location or time of day – all of which makes it more likely they will spend more with you. ●



# OFF THE SHELF RELIABILITY

## TAILORED TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

For a more personable approach to leisure management software get in touch. Our online features are fully integrated into your branding.

Be it...

Online Memberships

Paying off Debts

Renewing Online

Booking PT's & Classes Via Video Links

EZ / RUNNER

t: 0844 847 5827

w: [www.ez-runner.com](http://www.ez-runner.com)



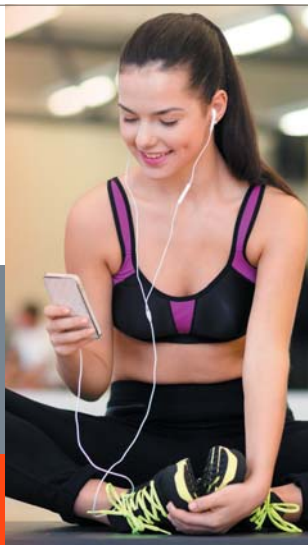
Software provided to the  
Education and Leisure Industries

### What can we do for you?

Maximise your facilities with our innovative leisure management solutions. With over 25 years industry experience across our team, make Xn your partner of choice.

Tel +44 (0)870 80 30 700  
Email [info@xnleisure.com](mailto:info@xnleisure.com)

[xnleisure.com](http://xnleisure.com)



# TAKE IT UP A BEAT

**What's the future of heart rate training, and how do we embrace it?**

**H**ear rate training first hit the headlines in 1976, when the Finnish cross country ski team swept the board at the Winter Olympics after training this way. From then on it became popular among elite athletes, but cumbersome chest straps and baffling information made the uptake slow among the general public.

However, the conversation is certainly in full swing now thanks to operators like Orangetheory Fitness, which has put heart rate training at the centre of its offering. With growing awareness and fast evolving technology, where is heart rate training heading?



Gyms must offer advice based on data from people's devices

## Liz Dickinson

**Mio Fuse: CEO**

Heart rate training is set to become far more pervasive. Since the introduction of the wristband, apps are springing up teaching people how to understand heart rate training and group classes are using it, with heart rates displayed on a big screen.

The technology is still fairly large and limited in terms of the activities it can measure, but in the not too distant future it will become smaller, with metrics to help with training optimisation, including oxygenation, respiration and hydration.

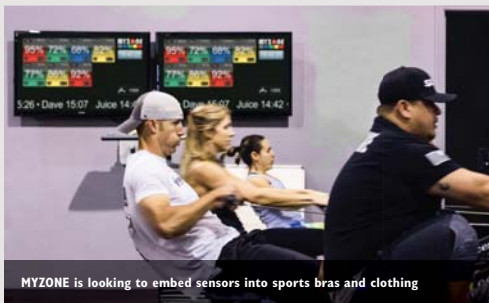
Hydration is important. Most people are dehydrated but don't realise it – it can make them think they're hungry. Oxygenation and respiration are metrics more relevant for the upper echelons: oxygenation measures the efficiency of your cardiovascular system, making sure you're optimising exercise in such a way that you're getting enough oxygen to feed your muscles.



We're currently working with major clothing companies with a view to integrating the technology into clothes, so soon the monitoring of our vital statistics will become just another thing we take for granted.

As heart rate technology becomes more widespread, and in multiple forms, clubs need to be ready to take the data that streams from those devices and offer guidance and training advice. They could also change their programming so it's more centred around heart rate. It will make a dramatic impact, because people will start to train efficiently instead of spending hours at the gym without seeing any benefit. They'll see weight loss and increases in CV strength, which helps in all areas. It will really change the ability of the average person to get in shape.

The growth in this technology will lead to more apps and websites being developed to deliver coaching, so gyms would be well advised to create an app for themselves.



## Dave Wright

### MYZONE: CEO

Training at any intensity without available data is like driving your car without a dashboard. Heart rate data brings that knowledge to the forefront.

Credibility and data capture will be the focus going forward. Technology has moved on from being accelerometer-based, but even wrist-mounted heart rate monitors are not 100 per cent accurate – they use optical blood flow, shining a light through the wrist, and thus can't accurately measure activities where the wrist moves erratically, such as functional training.

The issue the industry faces is that we need an accurate way of measuring heart rate data that's both frictionless and credible. At the moment, technology doesn't tend to tick both boxes, but it won't take long before a chip is embedded into the skin to

transmit data wirelessly. MYZONE is currently working with sports bra manufacturers such as Purelime, Victoria's Secret and Clothing Plus to look at embedding sensors into the clothing: the MYZONE module would merely button onto the garment.

Wearable technology will give the NHS the ability to collate data in a frictionless manner and align with the CMO guidelines, which are based on intensity that can only be measured as a percentage of your maximum heart rate.

Upskilling is needed to make the most of this opportunity, as currently there are some common misconceptions – for example, people need to know that fitness is not determined by your maximum heart rate but by your resting heart rate and how quickly you recover after activity.



## Simon Bateman

### HIIT Gym: MD

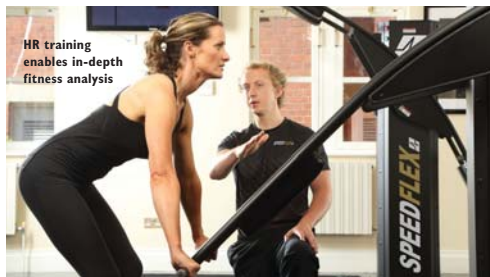
Devices are set to become less obtrusive, so people won't even notice they're wearing them. One of the big pushes will be on making heart rate technology more accurate, as well as integrating with people's daily lives so health clubs get a more holistic view of what their clients are doing away from the gym.

To do this, devices need to become easier to wear: there's still evidence that, after the initial novelty, people get bored of wearing them and they end up in a drawer. But before long, heart rate monitors will become widely available in clothing, or as stickers on the skin. At this point, health clubs need to make sure they're geared up

for the changes the technology will bring. The key to success will be how well gym instructors can interpret the results. They will have to upskill and be confident in interpreting data and conveying it to clients in an understandable way.

Instructors will need to evolve into wellness coaches, becoming more involved in people's lives and what they're doing outside of the gym, and using this information to help them get better results. They will need to spend more time with clients, building trust and being more proactive about helping them work towards their goals, identifying necessary lifestyle changes and imparting nutritional advice.

"Instructors will have to be confident in interpreting data and conveying it to clients in an understandable way"



HR training enables in-depth fitness analysis

## Matt Bolam

### Speedflex: Head of training

Going forward, the advances in wearable technology and the growing awareness of heart rate training will make it more ubiquitous, so people will be prepared to wear monitors around the clock.

One of the exciting aspects is that it will allow clubs to get a more holistic view of the member's lifestyle and use this to improve training results, as well as adherence and retention. We'll be able to analyse how they react to their day-to-day stresses and how stimulants, diet or lack of sleep affect them. From this, we can inform their training programmes, bringing in other disciplines if needed – such as yoga and meditation – and giving diet, nutrition and other lifestyle advice.

There's also potential to use heart rate monitors to create new revenue streams by providing in-depth analysis. For example, if a member runs a 10k race and wants to improve on their result for the next one, the gym instructor could analyse their performance and make recommendations.



## Lee Drabble

### Fitness First: UK gym floor experience manager

Having just opened our second BEAT location in London – a club within a club with heart rate training at the centre of the offering – we see heart rate training as a growing area. Monitors are cheap to buy and easy to store, and this style of training offers motivation and allows members to work out more efficiently to achieve results.

Going forward, what I'm most excited by isn't the new technology but the new applications, which will allow us to train smarter and personalise data.

I think we'll start to see heart rate training being put to wider uses, particularly weight loss. We worked on a couple of features for men's consumer magazines and helped one guy lose 10 kilos in 10 weeks, and another lose 12 per cent body fat in six weeks. Heart rate training informed their programmes and identified the reasons they hadn't been able to lose weight previously.

Everyone is different and needs to work at different intensities. One guy wasn't losing weight because he wasn't getting enough recovery time in his circuits class, so his body was eating muscle, not burning fat. It would be interesting to start using heart rate training in pilates and yoga classes too, as it would teach people to use their breath to control their heart rate.



"In the future, a data-powered lifestyle will provide a host of metrics for tracking; heart rate will be just one"



## Arron Williams

### Life Fitness: Special projects

I don't think there's much of a bright future for heart rate training by itself. The positives are: it's a useful way for novices to make endurance training more precise as an intensity metric; it can help keep you in the right training zone for endurance activities; it can provide biofeedback; it can help monitor a person's progress; and it can also help prevent over-training.

The cons of heart rate training are that it isn't performance-relevant: pace and power are more relevant, reliable metrics for performance training. Secondly, HR max formulas contain a wide margin of error, with large deviations dependent on age and gender. Lack of sleep, emotional stress, diet and weather can all significantly affect heart rate.

Finally, there's the issue of reliability and accuracy of heart rate monitors, particularly with some of the newer wearables.

In the future, a data-powered lifestyle will provide a host of metrics for tracking; heart rate will be just one of many metrics that help us optimise our health and wellbeing. ●



# SPEEDFLEX IS LOOKING TO INVEST IN YOUR GYM

**"We are creating a nationwide network of Speedflex centres. Get in touch now to add the newest high intensity workout to your offering, leaving your customers in little or no pain."**

**Alan Shearer**  
**Speedflex Director**

**We are looking to acquire or invest in a number of existing gyms throughout the UK.**

**For more information, contact us:**

**0191 212 7450 | [Paul.Ferris@speedflex.com](mailto:Paul.Ferris@speedflex.com) | [www.speedflex.com](http://www.speedflex.com)**

***SPEEDFLEX***

# FINGER ON THE PULSE

Is it time your facility embraced heart rate training? We round up some of the latest product innovations in this exciting area

## BAND NEW LAUNCH

Technology giant Microsoft has made its long-awaited entrance into the UK wearable technology sector with the launch of the fitness-focused Microsoft Band.

The wearable device boasts 10 sensors that can track a number of exercise and health metrics, including sleep quality, heart rate, calories, stress and even a person's sun exposure. It's compatible with Windows Phone, iOS and Android devices.

The wider accessibility of the Band – compared to the Apple Watch, which is only compatible with Apple mobile products – forms part of Microsoft's goal for the device to help people lead healthier lives, regardless of what smartphone they have.

[fitness-kit.net](http://fitness-kit.net) **KEYWORD** Microsoft



## SET PULSES RACING

Used for general exercise, the Mio Fuse fitness tracker features patented electro-optical cell sensor technology that's able to measure the volume of blood under the skin.

Algorithms are applied to detect the heart's true rhythm during workouts, with a 0.99 correlation to EKG (electrocardiogram) in lab testing.

"With all-day activity tracking and strapless heart rate monitoring, users can get a more accurate record of how many calories they've burnt, how hard they've pushed themselves during workouts and how their body is responding with the Mio Fuse," says Mio Global CEO Liz Dickinson.

Mio Fuse is water-resistant to a depth of 30m, and is compatible with a range of third-party apps.

[fitness-kit.net](http://fitness-kit.net) **KEYWORD**

**Mio Global**



## FEATURE COMFORT

The AmpStrip is exercise tracking expert FitLinxx's first foray into the consumer product market: a device as small as a plaster, and offering the same level of comfort and wearability, which allows users to accurately track their heart rate and activity.

Thin, waterproof and filled with sensors, AmpStrip has been designed to be worn comfortably every day. Using hypoallergenic adhesives, it sticks discreetly to the user's torso to

continuously track heart rate, activity, respiration, body temperature and posture, during workouts and also during rest, recovery and sleep.

The data – which is streamed wirelessly in real-time and held in the device's memory – can help inform users of how they are performing and where their body is in the stress/recovery cycle of training, potentially facilitating improvements in the type and intensity of each day's workout.

[fitness-kit.net](http://fitness-kit.net) **KEYWORD** FitLinxx

Log on to **www.fitness-kit.net** and type  
the company name under 'keyword search'



**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD **Matrix Fitness**

## POWER OF COLOUR

The Matrix IC7 indoor cycle, with its Coach By Color programme, is the result of an exclusive partnership between Indoor Cycling Group (ICG) and Matrix Fitness.

The bike's performance metrics are delivered to the rider via the Coach by Color Training Console – a console that vividly displays the user's effort and power in five different coloured zones. The rider can decide whether to use power or heart rate as the primary measure of their performance on each colour-coded ride.

The Matrix IC7, with its WattRate Power Meter, is a highly accurate (+/-1 per cent) power bike, also offering a 100-step precision magnetic resistance and 1:11 ratio high-speed flywheel.

## TOP TRACKING

MYZONE has launched a new Bluetooth-enabled version of its heart-rate tracking belt, along with a new mobile app, designed to offer an improved interactive user experience.

The company's tracking systems transmit exercise intensity data in real time and online, and the new device – MZ-3 – allows users to upload exercise data to the cloud via a smartphone.

The MYZONE system can be used without a person being a physical member of a club; MZ-3 also integrates with most third-party apps such as Strava and MapMyFitness, as well as other ANT+ devices such as Garmin.



**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD **MYZONE**

## WIRELESS MONITORING

Heart rate monitoring and resistance level awareness are available via the onboard computer on Keiser's new group exercise cycle, the M3i. The computer can also be partnered wirelessly with either a phone or tablet using Bluetooth technology.

To take advantage of this technology, Keiser has also developed a group exercise projection system, the iKeiser. Unlike other systems that connect to a rider-worn monitor, the iKeiser is linked by Bluetooth to the bike and reflects the performance of the rider on a large TV screen, or even multiple screens.



**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD **Keiser**

**DuraFLEX™**  
PREMIUM FITNESS FLOORING

exclusively at



**INDIGOFITNESS**



DuraFLEX is not just rubber flooring, it's a 32mm thick, premium fitness flooring system engineered to maximise comfort, durability and functionality.



10 Year Guarantee



Full Integration with  
Other Flooring Surfaces



Reduced Noise and  
Vibrations

**PERFECT FOR  
FUNCTIONAL  
TRAINING  
SPACES**



[www.indigofitness.com](http://www.indigofitness.com)



01455 890100



[sales@indigofitness.com](mailto:sales@indigofitness.com)

**LEISURELINES**  
A Leisure Lines Company



# TRAINING FOR LIFE

What's hot in functional training? We round up some of the latest launches



## BRIDGING THE GAP

FitPro's TRIBE Team Training has been created to bridge the gap between group exercise programmes in the studio and one-to-one gym-based training with personal trainers.

The concept features five programmes, each focused on a specific area: HIIT, core stability, low impact strength and toning, kickboxing, and children's fitness. Groups of between seven and 10 people can participate. There are new releases every seven weeks.

**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD  
FitPro

## ENTRY-LEVEL RIG

Equipment supplier D2F Fitness has launched the XCUBE Atom functional training rig. Coming in at 2.5sq m and requiring a space of approximately 4sq m, the entry-level rig has been created to enable small or budget gyms to offer functional training programmes to members. It can be used by up to 12 people as part of a group HIIT, bootcamp or circuit training session.

The XCUBE Atom can be supplied as a standalone functional training rig or with a selected range of accessories and storage solutions. Each rig comes with a step-up and dip station attachment, but removable attachments in the XCUBE range need to be purchased separately.



**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD  
D2F Fitness



**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD  
Escape Fitness

## JUMPING FOR JOY

Three jump ropes have been added to Escape Fitness' range of functional training equipment.

The additions – Fitness Jump Rope, Leather Jump Rope and Cross Training Jump Rope – have been designed to cater for different types of functional training, and each product offers different benefits for clients.

Fitness Jump Rope is aimed at the mass exercise market and can be included in personal training sessions, circuits and boot camps. Leather Jump Rope has been designed with martial arts gyms and boxers in mind, while Cross Training Jump Rope – as the name suggests – is targeted at the cross training segment.

## CHANGING COURSE

Lifetime Training's one-day REP's-accredited Functional Resistance Training course has been updated to stay in line with the latest scientific research. It examines the role of functional training for fitness professionals, focusing on theory and movement patterns as well as functional anatomy, while providing functional exercise programming.

Often misunderstood, the essence of functional training is in the carry-over to the person's performance in their everyday life (right) as opposed to the equipment used, according to Lifetime Training's course. The update includes case studies, following the work of people like Gray Cook, Gary Gray and Thomas Myers, who have built on established theory.



**fitness-kit.net** KEYWORD  
Lifetime Training



Reebok  
PROFESSIONAL  
OFFICIAL  
DISTRIBUTOR



D2F Fitness

# PREMIUM XCUBE QUALITY AFFORDABLE PRICE



Meet our most compact and affordable rig to date.

**XCUBE Atom** is the perfect way to inject fun into your gym and deliver results such as improved loyalty and increased revenue without a hefty price tag.

- Give your members more variety in their training programmes
- Expand your group training offering
- Keep everyone coming back for more.

D2F can supply **Atom** as a standalone rig or with a carefully selected range of functional training accessories and storage solutions. Discover more at:  
<https://goo.gl/2aVb2w>

D2F Fitness

[www.d2ffitness.com](http://www.d2ffitness.com) Follow us @d2ffitness  
+44 (0)845 862 9855 / [info@d2ffitness.com](mailto:info@d2ffitness.com)



# Pick 'n' mix

Launched in New York in 2013, ClassPass targets those who want to cherry pick the classes they attend – and it came to London in March. Co-founder and CEO Payal Kadakia tells Kath Hudson about its swift rise to success

Payal Kadakia



## What is ClassPass?

It's a monthly fitness membership programme that allows people to take classes at different studios and boutique clubs. For US\$99 a month, people have access to an unlimited number of classes – but they can't do the same class more than three times a month.

We've built the product for the dabbler who wants variety; our members love ClassPass as it gives them chance to try something new. But if users find the studio that's their 'home' and only want to work out there, then they should pay the full amount directly to the studio.

We integrate with all the studios, so once someone hits 'reserve' on our site or app, it goes seamlessly into their portal.

## Where did the idea come from?

When I was looking for a ballet class in New York, I became frustrated by the long-winded technology experience. I

wanted to create an easy to use, flexible product that would allow people to stay connected to their activities and passions post-college life.

## How long did it take to bring the concept to fruition?

I had the idea in April 2013 and it was launched in June 2013: as an entrepreneur you have to act quickly.

## Who is your target market?

It was predominantly females, but now we're starting to see more males enter the market. The age varies from early 20s to mid-40s, with 65 per cent of our users new to fitness.

## How often do people use it?

The average for the gym industry is five or six times a month, but we're higher than that. We don't reveal our exact numbers, but we've done five million

reservations across our platform since we launched in 2013, all driven by social media and word of mouth.

## What challenges did you face when launching ClassPass?

You need to engage both sides – the studios and the customers – and they need to work in conjunction with each other. A lot of it was just finding the right product that would sell on both sides. In fact it was easy to sell to the studios, because the concept works well for them: they have excess capacity they want to fill. From a customer perspective, many people fear entering a new place and trying a new workout – we've taken away that friction.

## How do you choose which clubs to work with?

We look online at the photos they present, the sort of workouts they offer,



and the reviews and articles about them. The great thing about our platform is that we collect ratings and reviews right away and get feedback in real-time, so we know straight away if something isn't on par with the ClassPass brand. Our ambassadors go to classes, but we also trust our users to feed back to us.

### What is your studio empowerment programme?

Our belief is that fitness isn't just about going to the gym, so our focus is on exploring and creating a way for people to connect with whatever moves them. To create that connection, our focus has been on building a strong network of partners – and with that in mind, we actually invest resources in our studios.

Through our studio empowerment programme, we're now providing pre-payments to select studios to help them open their next location, creating more successful studio owners and more opportunities for people to attend classes.

### So how does ClassPass make money?

Our members pay us a monthly membership fee. From this, we have various contracts with each studio in our network, and we make a payment to them each time we bring an attendee to one of their classes.

We're also working on other revenue streams, as we believe there are a lot of services we can provide given the high levels of engagement we have with our customers.

### How has it been funded?

So far we've raised US\$54m. Early on we raised money through friends and

ClassPass has a network of over 5,000 clubs across the world, in the US, Canada and the UK

family, but as we started getting more traction we attracted more angel investors. We've partnered with great investors including General Catalyst to ensure we have the financial resources to properly achieve our ClassPass vision.

### How do you pitch the business to potential investors?

In the beginning, a lot of it was just based on my drive and my vision: I really wanted to get people working out and investors could see my passion. But the great part is that I barely have to pitch now, because they've usually heard about us already.

By the time we started raising large amounts of money, the numbers spoke for themselves. We significantly surpassed our forecasts. We used to show our projections and people would tell us there was no way we'd meet them. It was amazing to be able to go back and say we'd whipped through them and out the other side.

There aren't many companies that can change behaviour, but our product has changed the way people live. Everyone can latch on to and understand that.

### Why do you think ClassPass has been so successful?

It's a product that forces people to live a better life. Everyone feels better when they exercise, and we've created a product that really makes people feel excited about working out.

It's not even to do with losing weight, or vanity. It's about finding time for yourself and finding that mind-body connection. That's what keeps the ClassPass team focused and driven every single day.

### How many clubs do you have in your portfolio now?

We have over 500 in New York – including Flywheel, Pure Barre and Exhale – and more than 5,000 across the world. We're currently in 35 cities in the US, Canada and the UK.

Our latest launches were in London, UK, and Toronto, Canada, in March. It's predominantly the same product but we've launched with a commitment model in London, so people sign up for three months or six months.

London and Toronto were obvious choices for roll-out, because we want to make sure we're in all the hubs of the world. Within five years we'll be in every major city. Next we'll go to Australia, as well as parts of Asia and Brazil.

There's still a lot of growth potential in New York too: we're now beginning to work with the big box gyms, as well as trainers who have individual studios.

### What are your short- and long-term goals for ClassPass?

We're constantly evolving the product and the supply that we have, and are working on new experiences to introduce to the platform.

My mission for the company is to make the world more right-brained: I want people to connect with their passions, to have empathy and to live again. Fitness is a great way to get people going. ●



# OFF TO A SMART START

Independent research shows that Les Mills licensed facilities have 500 more members per club than the global average. Average Group Exercise attendance at Les Mills licensed clubs is 33 per cent, with top performers above 50 per cent.

But does this translate in the real world? Les Mills has been working with West Wood in Ireland and they've really seen the benefits.

Here's what Alan Leach, area general manager had to say: "In 2008, before we really started to realise the potential of the Les Mills brand we were getting 3,700 people a week visiting our group exercise offer in our three clubs. In 2015, after building dedicated Les Mills studios, the average for all of 2015, is 6,443 people per week visiting group fitness; that's a 74 per cent increase in attendance.

"Using a brand can  
push up attendance  
and membership  
numbers if it's  
used correctly"

## Real results

"In one of our clubs, which took the lead in driving Les Mills and making it the main focus for our product, weekly attendance for group fitness jumped from 1,650 in 2008 to 3,401 in 2015 - a 106 per cent increase in attendance. This club has also seen a 21 per cent

reduction in attrition, and a 19 per cent increase in membership numbers. We put this down to the impact the Les Mills brand has had on our business."

Strength and weight training drives 21 per cent of the total global group exercise attendance. Les Mills BODYPUMP™ focuses on low weight loads and high repetitions proving to be 29 per cent more effective than a heavier weight for fewer repetitions. So members get results, meaning they're motivated and hang around longer.

Leach continues: "We always quickly introduce members to our Les Mills group fitness timetable and it makes such a difference. They love the social aspect of Les Mills. They meet other people before and after classes. They suddenly feel exercise can be part of their lifestyle. And all of this is what club

Members love the sociability of a Les Mills class

LES MILLS



**"AFTER BUILDING DEDICATED LES MILLS STUDIOS,  
THE AVERAGE FOR ALL OF 2015 IS A 74 PER CENT  
INCREASE IN ATTENDANCE"  
ALLAN LEECH, WESTWOOD**

owners and managers have been trying to achieve for decades. And Les Mills has made this easily achievable.

#### **Great motivation**

"My sales staff are trained to explain the Les Mills 'SMART START' programme. This is an incredible reassurance to new joiners, who may be 'scared' of the gym experience. 'SMART START' has dramatically increased numbers in our classes. In fact, by so much, we've had to double the size of our studios.

"Nothing motivates instructors like Les Mills. Nothing improves team work and staff morale like the Les Mills

programme. I know we would never hold on to our best staff, if we did not have Les Mills as part of our product."

"The support Les Mills offers the management team makes all the difference for us. There is a world of difference between making the decision to offer great classes, and actually delivering amazing, motivating, world-class group fitness classes. Without the training and support we receive from Les Mills, we would never have seen the increases in attendance, membership numbers, and profitability. We wouldn't be where we are today without the programming and support provided." ●



**The Les Mills programme greatly boosts staff morale**

Follow Les Mills UK - @lesmillsuk  
Like Les Mills UK on Facebook/LesMillsUK

Subscribe to Les Mills UK's YouTube page/LesMillsUK  
Follow Les Mills UK on Instagram - LesMillsUK



# Retention 3.0

The future of retention will be less about reacting to a lost member, and more about creating a proactive circle of daily customer care. Dr Paul Bedford offers a glimpse of the future based on the expertise shared at this year's inaugural Retention Convention

**T**he fitness industry is in the midst of a paradigm shift. Low-cost has established itself as the major growth area, boutiques and studios are emerging as an alternative to traditional clubs, and new technology platforms like ClassPass (see p62) are offering the public flexible ways to consume fitness services and products. Faced with this competition and increased consumer choice, retention needs to be as high a priority for operators as new member sales.

## Digital age

Retention strategies began around 20 years ago with human-driven, staff-to-member initiatives based on 'we believe this is true' thinking. In 2002, following

the release of Dr Melvyn Hillsdon's *Winning the Retention Battle* research, we began to incorporate data analysis to identify where and why the problems existed. Now, third generation retention strategies will be built on a combination of staff, mobile apps, cloud services, Big Data analytics and social technologies.

While operators would clearly like to run one automated software system that does everything from membership management to marketing e-blasts, the evidence is that human interaction still has a far greater impact on retention than its technological counterpart; the most effective use of technology is to empower staff – using it to enhance their relationships with your members – rather than replace them.





ALL PHOTOS: WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

## Human interaction still has a far greater impact on retention than technology; use technology to empower staff

Indeed, the Next Generation 3.0 retention approach is a member experience method that involves stored member data, the CRM system and your staff – and it's built to provide personalised club experiences via a multitude of devices. This approach is the foundation of Ken Blanchard's book *Raving Fans: A Revolutionary Approach to Customer Service*.

Going forward, the ability (or inability) to compete in the fitness market will therefore be based on operators maximising technology to provide insights and data that will enable their staff to enhance and personalise the member experience.

Customer-centricity will be key – trying to serve customers with systems that are built for mass deployment of a single member experience simply won't work. The sheer pace of change in technology, and the options this provides to the consumer, means we have to explore new ways to provide member services and reassess the role of traditional models.

### Personalising the experience

With the proliferation of communication channels meaning members can now choose their preferred method(s) of interaction, the need to build a unified customer service approach – with integrated services that are seamless in their availability and proactive in their approach – is increasingly important. This is already being delivered in the boutique health and fitness club market, where personalised messaging or invitations for opportunities, such as one-off special guest classes, are relevant and delivered on time.

Equipment manufacturers are also working hard to integrate new technologies that provide more information about the individual member and, as such, enable club operators to push targeted information to the member.

However, despite these opportunities, many operators are struggling to develop a strategy that supports the individualisation of the experience. This is because they still use member

service models built for the masses, and continue to reduce member-facing staff to such a low level that customer service is ad hoc and varying in quality.

### Building brand fans

But where service is done well, health club members are changing their behaviours and becoming 'brand fans' that engage with the brand as a way to build their own image – particularly true of those customers using boutique and specialist facilities.

And as members evolve, so must organisations. With many health club operators offering similar products and services, there's a growing requirement to design unique member benefits to set your club apart – and service is becoming the primary differentiator in this competitive market.

Companies will need to grow more intimate relationships by leveraging their business analytics, CRM systems and social media platforms to understand member behaviour and requirements and anticipate their needs. ▶



- » 3D Design ◀
- » Rendering ◀
- » Lockers ◀
- » Locking Systems ◀
- » Cubicles ◀
- » Washrooms ◀



Safe Space Lockers Ltd



Please call 0870 990 7989  
for more details

E: [info@safespacelockers.co.uk](mailto:info@safespacelockers.co.uk)  
[www.safespacelockers.co.uk](http://www.safespacelockers.co.uk)

## RETENTION



Boutique studios use personalised messages and event invitations

► Digital media can be the tool to introduce new levels of intimacy. For example, digital member care might see the introduction of a video chat service for members. This FaceTime-style service will offer things like on-demand video PT advice, class bookings and member feedback, as well as support with typical queries.

Certainly retention 3.0 will see social technologies becoming increasingly integrated into existing businesses within the next 12–18 months. In addition to being a strategic component in virtually all member engagement and marketing strategies, data from social applications will feed the product and service development process too.

### How well do you know your members?

To maximise retention opportunities, organisations need to understand the full end-to-end member journey, from searching the web for a suitable club right through to termination of membership. For instance, why did they join that particular club? And how did they find that club – did they surf the web, ring round local options or were they a walk-in enquiry? Once a member, how do they interact with the club – how often do they visit, what do they do when they are there, is there a social element to their visits?

All of these things, including details collected during online joining, can provide opportunities to segment members by their experience or interest, leading to content-rich communications specific to the member's requirements. During visits, staff can also use this information to provide meaningful advice about exercise that assists the member in achieving their goals.

Frequency of visit information can also be used as a predictor of

behaviour, allowing staff to provide appropriate support that encourages continued membership. And when memberships are terminated or expire, information about the member can be used to reconnect and re-engage at a level that's more personal and relevant.

But communicating with members is set to get a whole lot smarter with the introduction of i-beacons which, similar to a GPS, use members' mobile devices to identify their physical location and activity with the club. Smartphones and tablet devices are being adopted faster than ever, with people spending more and more time online, and we can already see members using their own devices to consume media while exercising. Operators can harness this, using data from i-beacons to assist staff in managing the member experience by pushing relevant and timely content to each member.

Ultimately, operators can create a member engagement platform whereby staff know who the member is, where they are within the health club, and what services and support they require.



## Eco-Friendly Wet Kit Bags From Kingswood Leisure Services

Add That Final Touch To  
Your Customers Visit!  
Large enough for all types  
of swimwear and wet kit  
including shoes.

**Order Today and  
save 20% Discount.**

Prices from £64.00 per  
case of 4000 bags  
(exc. vat & delivery).

Visit [www.wetkitbags.co.uk](http://www.wetkitbags.co.uk)  
or call 01702-718940 /  
718949 for more details.

Free dispensers and bulk  
prices also available!



Members could talk to a PT or nutritionist online, for face-to-face support

### Service development

When developing new services, it's important to view the situation holistically. Service design requires an interdisciplinary, interactive approach to develop services that are competitive and act as a differentiator, thereby driving retention. The process should bring together people, IT, communications and other parts of service delivery, with the overall goal of providing higher quality service.

Services should be designed based on documented member needs, with the objective of creating a service that's user-friendly, competitive and relevant. At the core of this process is the ability to understand member behaviour, needs and motivations.

One key element is improving the self-service experience. A poorly designed self-service solution can push members

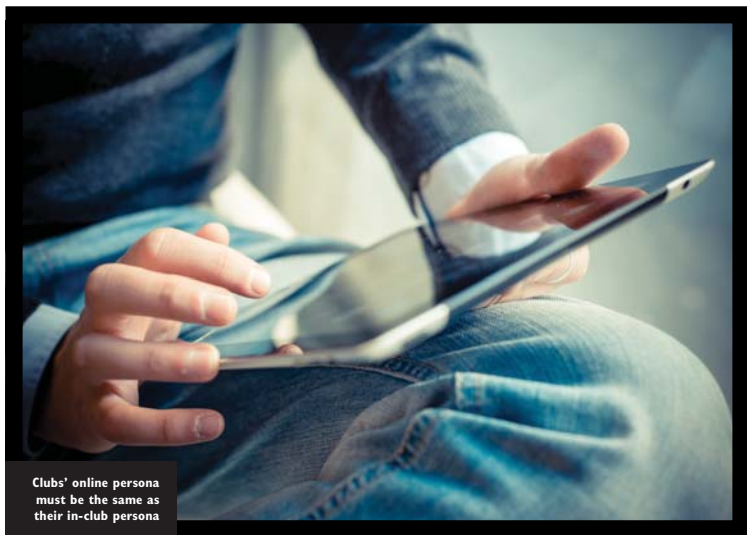
away. Use the time the member spends in the self-service solution to get to know them intimately. Understand their behaviour and their needs by asking relevant questions early on. Build dynamic scripts to respond to these needs instead of using fixed solutions. React to who the member is, when they are doing business with you, with what frequency, and adapt your responses to their needs, not to your schedule.

Operators should also improve the web experience. Do you have the same persona on the web as you have on other channels? Does the member recognise you on the web or in social media? Use the time on the web to get to know your members and put dynamic web features in place to customise their experience with you. Be careful to avoid designing web-based apps for mobile devices as poor copies ▶



**KLS**  
**KINGSWOOD**  
Leisure Services  
Suppliers to the leisure  
industry since 1984

Showroom & Warehouse,  
18-19 Rutherford Close, Progress  
Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 5LQ.



Clubs' online persona  
must be the same as  
their in-club persona

## Allow feedback from members and staff and prepare for continuous improvement projects. Member care is a journey where your services evolve together as your members change

► of your brand's web page. Consider each screen as real estate that you need to optimise for that specific experience.

### Your journey to retention perfection

To begin your own journey – innovating your customer experience by integrating human and digital member care – first ensure you have a holistic view of your members and their needs, behaviour and drivers.

Define the timing aspect of your solution. Do experienced members and new members have the same need for careful explanation, or should you be providing an adapted response depending on how well the member knows your services?

Consider member care as unique to each and every person. Your solution should see the health club member

as an individual, not as a group. Their needs are their own and their experience is personal.

These members are social and are able to share their knowledge of your products and services. Be where they are and ensure you join them proactively on their journey.

Measure key metrics before, during and after a new feature is launched. Define those metrics ahead of time and follow them carefully. Let people know how you are doing and what you are doing to improve your performance.

And finally, create your solution together by ensuring that all staff are involved, from the marketing team through to gym staff and group fitness instructors. Take competence from all elements of the business – and if possible from your members too. Your member solution will need to develop

over time, so allow feedback from members and staff and prepare for continuous improvement projects.

Member care is a journey where your services evolve together as your members change. ●

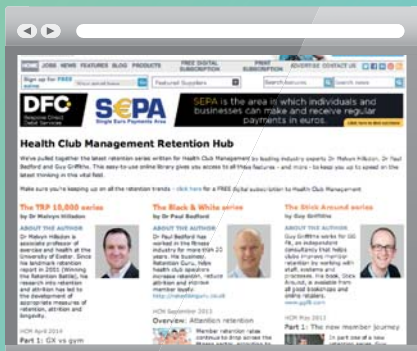
### NEED MORE INSPIRATION?

If you missed the Retention Convention in May, it can be purchased on a pay per view basis – for more information, contact [paul@retentionguru.co.uk](mailto:paul@retentionguru.co.uk)

To access the full series of features written for *Health Club Management* by the panel of Retention Convention presenters, visit [healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention](http://healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention)

# Health Club Management Retention Hub

We've pulled together the latest retention series written for Health Club Management by leading industry experts Dr Melvyn Hillsdon, Dr Paul Bedford and Guy Griffiths. This one-stop online shop gives you quick access to the latest thinking, stats, trends and reports in this vital field.



Let the experts keep you up to speed on  
the latest retention trends  
[healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention](http://healthclubmanagement.co.uk/retention)

# Follow the leader?

86 per cent of UK organisations face leadership issues, according to new research from Deloitte. Mark Bowden reports

**I**t's very clear that leadership is becoming a perennial issue for British companies, yet few feel they're making progress in addressing it.

According to Deloitte's *UK 2015 Human Capital Trends* survey, almost nine in 10 cite leadership as one of their biggest challenges. This makes it the most pressing concern for companies for the third year running.

Half of UK organisations say their succession plans are not clear and current, yet only eight per cent believe their leadership pipeline is "excellent" to address the problem. The issue among Millennial leaders (people born after 1982) is particularly prevalent, as only six per cent declare they have "excellent" programmes in place for their professional development.

## About the survey

**M**ore than 3,300 business and HR leaders participated in Deloitte's 2015 *Global Human Capital* survey. They represent businesses of varying sizes across a range of industries in over 100 countries.

This special excerpt, the *UK Human Capital Trends* report, is based on results from 72 UK respondents and summarises the trends and priorities of HR and business leaders. This report is designed to complement the Deloitte 2015 *Global Human Capital Trends* report, available at [www.deloitte.com/hctrends2015](http://www.deloitte.com/hctrends2015)



PHOTO: WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / PRESSMASTER

## Millennials will become ever more important in the UK workforce

This in spite of the fact that, by 2025, Millennials will represent 75 per cent of the workforce. Combined with the fact that four million Baby Boomers are retiring each year, it's clear that Millennials will become ever more important to the workforce, shaping the talent and leadership agenda.

This issue is particularly key to the health and fitness industry, which has a generally younger workforce than many other industries. These organisations must ensure they invest in this generation's development or risk the future leadership of the industry.

## Lack of engagement

An organisation's culture – defined as employee engagement, meaningful work, strong leadership importance, and job and organisational fit – has risen as a key issue for companies worldwide. The talent themselves, particularly Millennials, are helping drive this change. Indeed, in another recent Deloitte survey, 78 per cent of Millennials cited working for an innovative organisation as a reason for selecting an employer.

But in the UK alone, fewer than 20 per cent of organisations surveyed for this year's *Human Capital Trends* believe they can clearly define their culture, and communicate and measure it. As a result, eight out of 10 respondents said they had a lack of employee engagement.

Outdated processes such as annual performance reviews and unnecessarily complicated work environments are factors that are likely to be driving this disengagement. Companies need to look at their 'offer' to employees, and ensure it's updated to reflect the employment experience that the workforce demands. In areas such as talent acquisition and retention, businesses must revamp their approach to secure and maintain an engaged workforce.

## The wider talent pool

There's little doubt that contingent workers, such as the self-employed and contractors, are of fundamental importance to the health and fitness industry. Allowing companies to have fast access to a network of seasoned professionals such as personal trainers or fitness instructors, the use of 'on-demand' talent is also now growing in popularity throughout the rest of the UK's workforce. Across all sectors, six out of 10 companies reported that their need for such workers will continue to grow over the next three to five years. This is almost 10 per cent higher than the global average.

As many of these contingent workers are not currently integrated into companies' HR systems, if they want to engage and retain these professionals, organisations must think about how





## Key statistics

- 87 per cent of UK companies cite leadership as one of their biggest challenges
- Only 6 per cent of UK respondents say they have "excellent" programmes in place to develop Millennials
- Half of UK organisations say their succession plans are not clear and current
- Less than 20 per cent of UK organisations believe they can clearly define their culture, and communicate and measure it
- Over 70 per cent of participants rated learning as an "important" or "very important" problem
- Six out of 10 UK HR leaders reported that their need for contingent workers, such as freelance and part-time staff, will continue to grow over the next three to five years

**Talented self-employed contractors are fundamental to the growth and success of the fitness sector, as well as other industries**

their talent programmes, processes, strategies and analytical tools will translate across a diverse employment base. The model requires unified management and risk controls across the contingent and traditional employee bases. Companies who don't do this risk alienating this vital talent pool.

### Learning and development

The employment experience is impacting learning and development, which has become a more serious talent challenge for UK organisations. The issue has grown from the 11th most important in 2014 to become the fourth biggest challenge this year. Indeed, over seven in 10 survey participants rated learning as a "very important" or "important" problem. Learning capabilities also dropped significantly, as the 'capability gap' – the difference between the survey's importance index and readiness index – has nearly doubled in the past year, from 12 to 20.

The lack of investment in learning during the period of austerity has greatly impacted health and fitness providers, who, as discussed, are facing issues in leadership, trying to manage high levels of contingent workers, and yet still need to engage with their diverse employee base. In order to help workers mature skills that are not only important to the business' success, but that also develop meaningful careers that engage and retain talent, close attention to learning and development is essential.

### Driving change

In all, 87 per cent of organisations are planning to transform their HR functions in the next three years – yet fewer than one in 10 business leaders believe HR has the capability to transform itself. To the business, HR's administrative function is just table stakes. It's actually about how HR drives value to the business that really count – how its interventions enable greater efficiency.

Executives should see HR as a key player in the development of business strategy. HR and its leaders need to be bold, agile, business-integrated, data-driven and deeply skilled in attracting, retaining and developing talent.

This can all happen, but only with a proactive makeover. The health and fitness industry holds one of the most diverse employee bases in the UK, and the HR function in these organisations must adapt to help their businesses thrive in the new world of work. ●

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Bowden is a director in Deloitte UK's human capital practice.  
mbowden@deloitte.co.uk  
+44 (0)20 7007 5592  
@MarkMbowden



# Fitness on the RISE

The European fitness market continues its strong growth, according to the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2015*

The European fitness market continued to grow at an impressive rate in 2014, as the total number of health and fitness club members increased by 9 per cent to 50.1 million. While in younger fitness markets such as Poland, Turkey and Russia an increasing percentage of the population incorporates fitness into their lives, the more developed northern and western European markets grow mainly through innovation and diversification of fitness offers.

In value, the European health and fitness market grew by 4 per cent to achieve total revenues of €26.8bn in 2014. This further strengthens its position as the largest fitness market in the world ahead of the US, which was valued by IHRSA at €16.9bn (US\$22.4bn) in 2013.

These are some of the main findings of the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2015*, published in April by EuropeActive in co-operation with Deloitte. "The higher membership growth compared to total revenues underlines the ongoing market trend towards broader fitness offerings, including in the discount segment," says Karsten Hollasch, partner at Deloitte and head of the German Deloitte Sports Business Group. "For me, this is clearly a sign that the markets have matured and are reacting to their members' various needs and demands."

## Budget boom

The ongoing trend of an emerging discount segment, offering memberships for monthly fees of €30 or less, is visible in the membership ranking of European fitness providers, which is again led by German budget operator McFit. After entering the Italian and Polish market in 2014 and growing in Germany, Spain and Austria, the company had around 1.3 million members across its 223 European clubs by the end of 2014. McFit charges €19.90 a month for a membership and €9.90 for its new concept – functional training studio brand High5.



Pure Gym was one of the fastest growing companies in 2014

Meanwhile Netherlands-based Leisure Group Europe managed to surpass the one million member mark in 2014 and comes second in the rankings by member numbers. While the company also runs a premium concept (HealthCity), its growth was clearly driven by its budget brand Basic-Fit, which operated 264 clubs in Europe by the end of 2014.

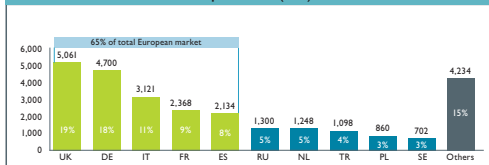
At the same time, UK-based companies Pure Gym and The Gym Group were among the fastest growing companies in the EuropeActive/Deloitte membership ranking. Had their aspired merger not been thwarted in 2014 after the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) decided to enter a second phase in the approval process, the combination of the two companies would have ranked third in Europe with 720,000 members.

## Membership and market share

With regards to competitive position, the Danish operator Fitness World retains by far the largest market share in any fitness market, with 450,000 members in Denmark – more than 56 per cent of the total Danish market.

Overall, the 30 leading operators by members increased their total memberships by 10.6 per cent to 10.2 million in 2014 – equalling 20 per cent of the total European market.

FIGURE 1 Top 10 European fitness markets by revenues in million EUR and share of the total European market (2014)



Source: European Health and Fitness Market Report 2015 (EuropeActive/Deloitte)

"A total of 19 M&A transactions were registered in 2014, more than doubling the previous year's total of nine deals"



Had the Pure Gym/Gym Group merger gone ahead, the combined companies would have ranked third in Europe for members

### Revenue ranking

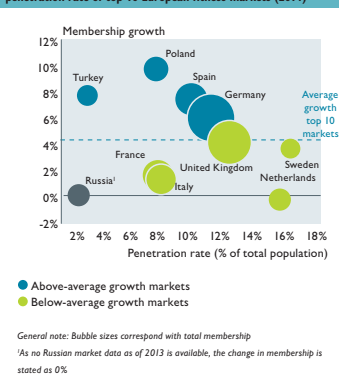
While budget operators strengthened their positions in the membership rankings, the revenue rankings are once again led by the major premium operators. Virgin Active, part of Richard Branson's Virgin Group, remains the revenue leader with an estimated €498m in revenues across Europe, despite the sale of nine British facilities to fellow top 10 operator Nuffield Health in August 2014. Virgin Active is among the market leaders in Italy and the UK and also operates clubs in Spain and Portugal.

Another premium operator, UK-based David Lloyd Leisure (DLL), is second in terms of revenues (€403m) and fifth in terms of membership (450,000). DLL operates 86 clubs in the UK and a total of 10 facilities in the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Ireland.

Health & Fitness Nordic – which operates clubs in Sweden, Norway and Finland under the SATS ELIXIA, Fresh Fitness and Metropolis brands – comes in third in the revenue ranking with €363m, while also ranking fourth in terms of membership with 487,000 members across 188 clubs.

Fitness First and INJOY are present in the revenue top 10 list. While Fitness First's club business declined slightly in 2014, the company entered the growing online fitness market through the acquisition of NewMoove last November. Meanwhile INJOY operates in the premium market; a 30 per cent share in the company was acquired last year by fellow top 10 operator Migros, the Swiss retailer which has the largest per-member revenues of any major operator at €1,000 annually.

**FIGURE 2** Total membership, membership growth and penetration rate of top 10 European fitness markets (2014)



Source: European Health and Fitness Market Report 2015 (EuropeActive/Deloitte)



The UK's David Lloyd Leisure ranked second in terms of revenue, and fifth in terms of membership numbers

### ► Investor interest

The fact that the top 10 operators now account for revenues of more than €2.8bn and appear to be on track to reach the mark of €3bn within the next two or three years is also driven by the increasing interest of investors in the fitness industry, as eight of the top 10 operators were involved in merger and acquisition (M&A) activities in 2014.

A total of 19 M&A transactions were registered in 2014, more than doubling the previous year's total of nine deals. Of the 19 deals, 10 were conducted by financial investors.

"The large number of M&A transactions in 2014 is a strong indicator that the financial world sees the health and fitness market as an attractive sector in which to invest," says Hollasch. "These investors will help the industry to continue its current growth, assist established operators in expanding their business, and support start-ups in entering the market with innovative concepts and offerings."

### Significant potential

Despite the strong growth rate in 2014, plenty of future potential remains throughout all European health and fitness markets. In the two largest national markets – Germany (9.1 million members) and the UK (8.3 million members) – budget clubs and highly specialised operators are driving an expansion of the fitness market. Yet these markets still have relatively low penetration rates.

Most notably, less developed markets such as Turkey and Russia still display considerable market potential. There are around 47,000 inhabitants for every one club in these markets, with penetration rates of 2.3 per cent and 1.9 per cent respectively. By contrast, Norway is the most mature market with a ratio of 5,192 inhabitants per club and a penetration rate of 19.6 per cent.

Looking forward, the health and fitness market will be shaped by macro-societal drivers such as increasing obesity, ageing populations and a growing middle class, as well as recent technological advances such as mobile applications, networked equipment, wearables and cashless payments. With major

operators and suppliers already reacting to these trends, it's hopeful that they will be able to use them to their advantage.

"Last year, we announced '80 million members of health and fitness clubs in the European region by 2025' as our industry goal," concludes Herman Rutgers, board member at EuropeActive. "With the growth in 2014, we're well on our way to reaching that goal. It shows the increased consumer enthusiasm for our industry's products and services." ●

### SOARING SUPPLIERS

2014 was a year of strong growth for equipment manufacturers, with the estimated global market size increasing by 10 per cent to €5.5bn. After notable falls in revenue in 2008 and 2009, due to the global economic situation, most manufacturers have recovered and partly exceeded their pre-crisis sales levels.

The eight leading manufacturers analysed in the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2015* – which account for 40 per cent of the total market – achieved a growth rate of 10.6 per cent globally in 2014. US-based Life Fitness remained the largest fitness manufacturer with global net sales of €562m, followed by Italian company Technogym (€465m) and Johnson Health Tech (€411m).

### READ ALL 145 PAGES...

A hard copy of the *European Health & Fitness Market Report 2015* can be purchased via the EuropeActive website – visit [www.health-club.co.uk/europe2015](http://www.health-club.co.uk/europe2015)

The report costs €95 for EuropeActive members, or €195 for non-members, plus delivery.



Out of warranty service, repair & estate  
management of fitness equipment.

Any make or model of equipment,  
Different levels of cover.

Live information about your equipment  
through a secure web portal.

Want to know more?

Call us on  
**08453 884 662**

**ServiceSport** 

**FitQuest**  
THE 4 MINUTE FITNESS INDEX

HOW FIT ARE YOU?

In 4 minutes with just 5 simple tasks,  
FitQuest tracks your progress against  
8 measures and provides your overall  
Fitness Quotient known as FQ™.

find out more at  
[www.miefitquest.com](http://www.miefitquest.com)

 @MieFitQuest

 [facebook.com/MieFitQuest](https://facebook.com/MieFitQuest)



**ME**  
Medical Research



# Ask the EXPERTS

What's the impact of technology on our sector, how geared up are we to deal with nutrition, and how do we retain good staff? We round up some of the highlights from 'Question Time' at this year's SIBEC UK



Photo from left to right: David McLean, SIBEC UK panel chair Steven Ward, Sandra Dodd, Graeme Hinde and Justin Musgrove

**T**he Belfry Golf Resort and Spa was the setting for this year's SIBEC UK, which saw a record number of operators and suppliers attending. Over half of the buyers were new to the event.

Setting the scene ahead of two days of intense business networking and face-to-face meetings, it was standing room only for the well-established industry debate. Chaired by ukactive executive director Steven Ward (**SW**), the panel comprised Justin Musgrove, MD at The Bannatyne Group (**JM**); David McLean, fitness manager at Edinburgh Leisure (**DM**); Sandra Dodd, CEO at Places for People Leisure (**SD**); and Graeme Hinde, MD of Leisure and Fitness Exchange (**GH**). We give a snapshot of some of the discussions...

**SW** – Recent media reports have suggested there's no link between exercise and weight reduction – something that could have serious implications for our sector. But does it also provide us with an opportunity to redefine ourselves?

**GH** – When people start to exercise regularly, everything else follows – including better eating. It's too simplistic to say you can't outrun a bad diet. It's

about starting people on a journey. The more they enjoy exercise, the better they'll eat and behave generally.

**SW to SD** – How does this factor into the marketing strategy at Places for People Leisure?

**SD** – Our goal is making people healthier and happier. A happier, less stressed person is more inclined to eat a healthy diet. In terms of our marketing, it's much more about encouraging a healthy lifestyle than losing weight.

**SW to DM** – How prepared is the frontline of our workforce to deal with questions of nutrition?

**DM** – It's clear that, in terms of nutrition advice, there's no 'one size fits all'. We're working with our frontline staff to train them in behaviour change and to develop their questioning skills.

**JM** – It's about getting the full offer right, and that includes three elements: physical activity, nutrition and mental wellbeing. We're definitely not in the right place at the moment, but the way in which we operate is changing.

For the press to spread the message that exercise won't help with weight loss

is absurd. That said, we do need to look at how we market our offering. If we're in the health sector, we need to get the messaging right across the business.


**Chris Dickson, West Lothian Leisure** (from the floor) –

We get shot at by the media, but we don't do a lot to help. We know that 61 per cent of the population don't meet the current physical activity guidelines, yet when people come into our clubs, PTs give standard guidance which at the moment includes intensive workouts like HIIT. We're just taking the inactive person from the couch to the gym and sending them straight back to the couch.

**SD** – It used to be about telling people what to do, but we need to ensure that our instructors understand it's now much more about considering how the facilities and services we offer can work for our members, and how exercise and activity (both in sites and outside) can fit with their lifestyle.

**JM** – I feel we need to go back to basics. What are we offering in our cafe/bars? What level of training do we provide to people on the gym floor? Do we consider how we can improve the mental wellbeing of people?





Technology should be used to support clients, with staff helping members to interpret results

**SW** – David Cameron says obesity and diabetes will be on the top of the prevention priority list for the next five years. This could be a challenge for the industry if we're caught unprepared. We have a short window of opportunity to ensure the message is about weight and exercise, not just weight.

**SW** – Moving on to the workforce. We operate in one of those rare sectors where you can enter at the bottom level and end up in the boardroom. How do we create a long-term strategy to retain staff?

**JM** – We're now looking at the people in our business to see if they're the right people with the sorts of qualities we need. It's all about soft skills: we need to recruit correctly and then get the training right. We've just started analysing staff turnover – something that would have been unheard of in the past.

In terms of payment reflecting the skills we require, it's a matter of supply and demand. If lots of people want to do a job, the salary will be low. It's tough to find strong people in sales roles right now, so salespeople rates are going up.

**SD** – While our staff retention is already strong, we recognise that

training is key and have recently recruited a full-time training manager – a new position at a senior level.

To complement our focus on gym staff, we now run a very successful management development programme called Rising Stars. We've had great success and of the 100 colleagues, 93 per cent have stayed with the company.

Meanwhile, lifeguards are a big issue for us. We're having to increase pay rates and create pathways for lifeguards.

**Claire Moore, Nottingham Trent University** (from the floor) – The nature of our organisations is that we have plenty of frontline staff, but few senior positions. How can we motivate new staff when this is the case?

**DM** – Fitness staff can progress to become a gym supervisor, but I believe it's more important to let them see how they can broaden themselves in their own area of expertise and how they can grow in that role.

Our gym staff are now delivering programmes for the NHS locally, and some have moved into work with the NHS. We're giving people better training and getting them ready to work across the health agenda. Our goal is to get all our staff to REP's Level 3.

**SW** – How is the rapid pace of technology impacting our sector?

**JM** – The role of technology should be to support clients: it can have a profound impact by giving useful analytics. It's all about the collaboration of staff – how they use technology to provide members with advice regarding what they do outside the facility.

**SW** – Accuracy is going to be key, and making sure staff are able to deal with the data from wearables.

**GH** – We must ensure our fitness staff can advise members about which apps and wearables might be best for them. Consumers are embracing wearable gadgets, so we must not be left behind.

**DM** – But it's not about us saying 'buy product x or y' – it's about the customer having that information and staff helping interpret the resulting data.

**SD** – Technology is key across our business. We've seen a huge growth in swimming as a result of Swimtag, and the use of ticketing kiosks at reception means we need fewer receptionists, who can be redirected to help in selling our facilities. ●

# Supplier showcase

We take a look at recent projects by Precor, Wattbike and Physical Company



The VeloStudio at Lee Valley VeloPark now offers 12 hi-tech Wattbikes, all fitted with the latest Bluetooth monitors

## ON YOUR BIKE

Client: Lee Valley Leisure Trust

Supplier: Wattbike

**L**ee Valley VeloPark is a world-class cycling facility developed for the London 2012 Olympic Games, which now supports cyclists from a grassroots participation level right through to elite performance.

Since opening to the public in March 2014, local residents have been able to use the facilities for track cycling, BMX and mountain biking. In addition, with the venue hosting a wide range of elite events, members of the public have enjoyed the spectacle of top-class elite cycling on their doorstep.

New for 2015 is the VeloStudio, developed at Lee Valley VeloPark to offer participants the latest in indoor cycling. Twelve Wattbikes fitted with the latest Bluetooth monitors have been installed in the studio, which will offer Capitalise Power Cycling, 1-2-1 fitness

testing, pedalling technique analysis, race nights and Sufferfest sessions – where riders can be virtually transported to the heart of the world's greatest races, from the mountains of the Tour de France to the cobbles of Paris-Roubaix.

Originally developed in partnership with British Cycling, and now chosen by the UCI World Cycling Centre, Wattbike offers robust testing and accurate, reliable, repeatable data. This gives people the chance to train in both their power and heart rate zones, ensuring the training in any session is much more efficient. And for athletes, the Wattbike offers transferable training as well as the ability to reach specific power outputs that can't be easily created on the track or on the road.

Wattbike's commercial director Richard Baker says: "The VeloPark is



**Wattbike enables people to train in both their power and heart rate zones**

synonymous with cycling. It's dedicated to providing opportunities for people to experience all variants of the sport – so we knew Wattbike was the perfect fit.

"We're looking forward to providing ongoing support to Lee Valley Leisure Trust, helping it to develop its indoor cycling offer and educating users in the benefits and versatility of the Wattbike." Details: [www.wattbike.com](http://www.wattbike.com)

# Real Data Real Ride Feel Real Improvements

wattbike.com




## The Ultimate Indoor Bike

Scientifically accurate, reliable training data combined with the most realistic ride feel of any indoor bike make the Wattbike the only choice for indoor cycling.

Achieve fitness goals faster and track your progress with in built testing, live training zones via **powercycling SE** and the new **powerapp**.

For more information please call  
**0115 945 5450** or email **sales@wattbike.com**

Available on the iPhone  
**App Store**

 **Google play**



# wattbike

 @wattbike  /wattbike  /wattbike



Director of sport and exercise Jim Aitken MBE, with elite student athlete Rhona Auckland and Precor's Jonathan Griffiths

## A COMMITMENT TO EXCEL

Client: Edinburgh University  
Supplier: Precor

As one of the top universities in the world, the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Sport and Exercise (CSE) continues to excel and ensure its members and guests have access to the most technologically advanced fitness equipment. The centre recently benefited from one of the largest single site installations in Europe, with 102 pieces of Precor's top of the range 885 series cardiovascular equipment being installed, bringing the total number of Precor CV machines to 145 across its Cardio, myGym and Circuit Gym facilities.

Edinburgh is the first university in Europe to offer the recently launched Precor Next-Generation Experience Series treadmills, with 45 units, as well as seven new Adaptive Motion Trainers (AMTs) to add to the 30 already on offer.

In keeping with a strategic pledge and ongoing commitment from the university to ensure members and guests have the ultimate workout experience, all units feature Preva networked fitness, Precor's cloud-based software platform that incorporates a suite of tools to help both operators and exercisers achieve their set targets. "We continually seek to enhance member experience and provide the highest level

of facilities for our members and the community," says Jim Aitken MBE, director of sport and exercise at the University of Edinburgh. "The refurbishment is core to our health and wellbeing advocacy and central to promoting Precor's Preva networked fitness software, which helps our students and the lifelong community achieve their goals. It's a fantastic training aid that monitors, educates and inspires, and everyone loves it."

He continues: "The increased number of treadmills follows member feedback requesting additional units and demonstrates our belief in acting on their comments. Our installation of the new Precor Next-Generation Experience treadmills is one of the largest in Europe."

Additional refurbishment in the Cardio space included new wiring to support network connectivity and a refreshed layout to provide more logical cardio kit clusters and member flow.

To celebrate the refurbished facilities, a launch event was held with an opening ceremony jointly conducted by Aitken, Precor marketing manager Jonathan Griffiths and elite student athlete Rhona Auckland, who recently became European U-23 cross country champion. They were joined by 102 members – reflecting the 102 latest CV pieces installed – who were the first to use the new equipment. Attendees were challenged to walk, run, stride or cycle as many metres as they could, with the aim of achieving 885 km (around 500 miles) between them, in acknowledgement of Precor's top of the range 885 series. Members were inspired to participate with The Proclaimers' song – *I'm Gonna Be (500 miles)* playing in the background.

Details: [www.precor.co.uk](http://www.precor.co.uk)





## You told us what you wanted in a treadmill. Now it's here.

Our new Experience Series treadmill is designed and built to last. Extensive research and development with operators, technicians and exercisers has resulted in the most robust, reliable and energy efficient treadmill we've ever produced. It's also the quietest and most stable running experience we've ever delivered. So, you enjoy a premium ownership experience, and your members enjoy their run.



See it in action at [precor.com](http://precor.com)  
08448 480101 · [info@precor.com](mailto:info@precor.com)

© 2014 Precor Incorporated

**PRECOR**



The partnership with Physical Company has enabled LA fitness members to 'smash their fitness levels out of the park'

## GYM FLOOR SHAKE-UP

Client: LA fitness  
Supplier: Physical  
Company



The Primal Series training concept uses kit such as kettlebells, slam balls, Powerbags, ladders and SandRopes

Although recently acquired by Pure Gym, it's business as usual for LA fitness while the CMA verdict on the deal is pending. And that means a continued presence for the successful Primal Series gym floor classes, created in partnership by Physical Company and LA fitness.

Since its launch in October 2014, the Primal Series offering – comprising five different 30-minute classes – has kicked into action a new mode of functional training at LA fitness, engaging members in using a wide range of Physical Company products effectively in the gym. There are now over 730 classes a week taking place across all 43 LA fitness sites.

July sees the fourth series of programmes get underway, ensuring the challenges remain fresh and enticing for trainers and members alike.

The Primal Series concept uses a diverse selection of Physical Company training kit including kettlebells, slam balls, Powerbags, Grid foam rollers, BOSU, medicine balls, ladders, dumbbells, Surge and SandRopes.

For Physical Company, the Primal Series is an ideal way to showcase its products and help gym users become familiar with its kit – particularly the more unusual, innovative pieces. Once they've done a few Primal Series classes, members are more confident about using the kit in their own workouts,

meaning newer items are being understood and widely used.

"The Primal Series is the perfect vehicle to encourage people to try new kit and reap the rewards from mixing up their training," says John Halls, Physical Company managing director. "As suppliers to the industry, we need to know that clubs buying our products will see their members making the most of the new kit, to justify the investment."

For LA fitness, Primal Series has reinvigorated functional training on the gym floor: it has created a unique opportunity for members to enjoy free classes with a high level of PT attention.

Participants' feedback on the classes has been excellent, while use of the kit in individuals' workouts has increased, thereby driving ROI for LA fitness on these innovative items. Indeed, there's a tangible knock-on effect – not only from Primal Series participants incorporating the Physical Company kit into their own gym workouts, but also from other members being inspired to try the kit after seeing the classes in action.

"Our partnership with Physical Company has shaken up the gym floor by encouraging people to train in this new way and smash their fitness levels out of the park," says Sam Theyers, national head of fitness at LA fitness. "Uptake of functional training on the gym floor has increased dramatically."

Details: [www.physicalcompany.co.uk](http://www.physicalcompany.co.uk)



Available  
in print  
& online



# HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK 2015

The 11th edition of the Health Club Management Handbook will be a comprehensive guide and reference tool distributed to industry operators, buyers and suppliers and available at leading industry events, LIW, IHRSA, FIBO & SIBEC.

## WHAT'S IN IT?

### FOR INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS

- Multiple listings of all industry suppliers by:
  - A-Z
  - Phone book
  - Web address book
  - Product selector
- Company profiles including key information, contact details, images of products and a picture of your company contact
- Vertical strip adverts in the address book section

**BOOK YOUR COMPANY PROFILE NOW!**

**Call: +44 (0)1462 431385**

**Email: [displaysales@leisuremedia.com](mailto:displaysales@leisuremedia.com)**

### FOR INDUSTRY OPERATORS

- Who's who? of key industry personnel in the UK and Europe:
  - UK operators – public, private and franchise
  - UK budget operators
  - European operators
- Features and reference material
- Predictions for 2015 from key industry figures
- Consumer and industry trends for 2015
- Industry statistics
- Diary dates – a guide to all industry events, shows and networking opportunities

**The Health Club Management Handbook  
is available to purchase at £50**

To book your space call the sales team on +44 (0)1462 431385

## Architects / Designers

**MASS**  
DESIGNERS

HEALTH CLUB & FITNESS DESIGNERS  
t 0844 344 5566  
w [massdesigners.com](http://massdesigners.com)

**zynk**  
interior architects

zynkdesign.com  
t 020 7193 1430

## AV / Sound

**Lightmasters**

- Wireless Cardio Cinema
  - Wireless Audio for Spin Classes
  - Full PA & AV Systems
  - LED & Fibre Optic Lighting Systems
- Finance Package Available

01480 407727

info@lightmasters.co.uk  
[www.lightmasters.co.uk](http://www.lightmasters.co.uk)

lightmasters uk ltd.

## Cleaning & Hygiene



**FREE STANDING  
ANTI BACTERIAL  
WET WIPE  
DISPENSER  
FOR GYMS**



Phone: 0800973165 [www.addgards.com](http://www.addgards.com)

## Computer Membership Software

**brightlime**  
sharp web based  
membership management

0844 800 8350

[www.brightlime.com](http://www.brightlime.com)

## Computer Membership Software continued

the standout  
leisure software provider

**Legend**

[www.legendware.co.uk](http://www.legendware.co.uk)

0800 031 7009

**WHATEVER YOUR SECTOR...**



Needs a management  
solution?

Get in touch and find  
out how you can start  
saving and making  
money, year after year...

**ez runner**

t: 0844 847 5827 w: [www.ez-runner.com](http://www.ez-runner.com)

**Go Figure** Club  
Management  
Software  
in 12 languages

[www.igofigure.com](http://www.igofigure.com)

To book your  
advert call the  
sales team on  
+44 (0)1462 431385

A highly functional,  
constantly improving  
system, to manage  
most leisure  
environments

- Membership / CRM
- Sport & class booking
- T1 & credit card
- Access control
- Fingerprint scanning
- Web Systems

Contact us on: +44 (0)1423 873 873  
[www.sportsoft.co.uk](http://www.sportsoft.co.uk)



## Customer Engagement

**Get Members.  
Keep Members.**

member  
drive by



[www.cfm.net](http://www.cfm.net)

**MYZONE**  
MAKING MOVEMENT MEASURABLE

**Phone: 0115 777 3333**

## Direct Debit Collection

### HARLANDS GROUP

High collection, low cost  
high quality membership collection  
from the direct debit experts

0845 2201636  
info@harlandsgroup.co.uk  
www.harlandsgroup.co.uk  
Harlands Services Ltd  
2nd Floor • 45-47 Deodar Road  
Hove • Brighton • BN1 2DE

hg

To book your  
advert call the  
sales team on  
**+44 (0)1462  
431385**

With more than 30 years' experience,  
**leisure media studio** will work with  
you to create bespoke print and web  
solutions to power your marketing

leisure media  
**STUDIO**

Contact Tim Nash

Tel +44 (0)1462 471917 [timnash@leisuremedia.com](mailto:timnash@leisuremedia.com)

## Drinks & Vending

**HYDRO+**  
MORE THAN JUST  
A VENDING MACHINE

01865 987910 [info@hydroplus.co.uk](mailto:info@hydroplus.co.uk)

[www.hydroplus.co.uk](http://www.hydroplus.co.uk)

Hydro+  
more than just water

## Exercise Equipment

planning  
products  
installation

**absolute  
performance**

029 2036 2664  
[www.apformance.co.uk](http://www.apformance.co.uk)

WERK SAN | UK SOLE SUPPLIER

setting the standard in gym equipment solutions

## Exercise Equipment (continued)

**C.V. TO  
FUNCTIONAL**  
WE HAVE IT ALL



INTERACTION TRUE  
Tel: 01204 541 710  
[www.gymequipmentonline.co.uk](http://www.gymequipmentonline.co.uk)  
[www.gymequipmentonline.co.uk](http://www.gymequipmentonline.co.uk)

FITNESS SYSTEMS

The future of  
functional training

**total gym**



T: 01494 458970 W: [www.gravityuk.net](http://www.gravityuk.net)

Week Method  
**RMT Club**  
EXCLUSIVE UK  
DISTRIBUTOR

2015 PRODUCT  
CATALOGUE  
NOW AVAILABLE

physical company  
sales@physicalcompany.co.uk  
01494 769 222  
[physicalcompany.co.uk](http://physicalcompany.co.uk)



Physical  
CONTACT

**SCIFIT**  
Prescribed for Progress®

Inclusive  
Fitness  
English Federation  
of Disability Sport

THE LEADER IN  
UPPER BODY & INCLUSIVE  
CARDIO EXERCISE

Tel 01344 300 022

[www.SCIFIT.uk.com](http://www.SCIFIT.uk.com)



**DESIGN  
MATTERS.**

Find out how the right design for  
your gym can revolutionise your appeal  
and your revenue potential.

[escapefitness.com/design-hcm](http://escapefitness.com/design-hcm)  
[sales@escapefitness.com](mailto:sales@escapefitness.com)  
0800 294 2803

escape

To book your advert call  
the sales team on  
**+44 (0)1462 431385**

## Exercise Equipment (continued)

**ServiceSport**  
Service and sales of equipment

- o Fitness Equipment Servicing
- o Sportshall Servicing
- o Equipment Sales
- o Parts Sales

Call: 0845 402 2456 [www.servicesport.co.uk](http://www.servicesport.co.uk)

"SPEEDFLEX IS AN INCREDIBLY EFFICIENT WAY TO EXERCISE."

"I CAN TRAIN AT A HIGH INTENSITY ALONGSIDE PEOPLE OF ALL DIFFERENT FITNESS LEVELS AND HAVE NO PAIN THE FOLLOWING DAY"

ALAN SHEARER, SPEEDFLEX AMBASSADOR  
[WWW.SPEEDFLEX.COM](http://WWW.SPEEDFLEX.COM)  
**SPEEDFLEX**

## Functional Training / Flooring

**FUNCTIONAL TRAINING: REDEFINED.**

The Escape Fitness 2015 Catalogue is available now.

Order your copy here...  
[www.escapefitness.com/2015chem](http://www.escapefitness.com/2015chem)  
[sales@escapefitness.com](mailto:sales@escapefitness.com)  
0800 294 2803

**escape**

**THE PREMIUM FLOORING MANUFACTURER.**

TECHNICAL FLOORING.  
FUNCTIONAL TRAINING.  
EDUCATION.  
INTERACTIVE STATIONS.  
USER EXPERIENCE.

**PAVIGYM UK**  
01223 969 870  
[support.uk@pavigym.com](mailto:support.uk@pavigym.com)  
[www.pavigym.com](http://www.pavigym.com)

**PAVIGYM**

## Gym Mirrors

### MIRRORS FOR TRAINING LTD

• Mirror Installation - Nationwide  
• Portable Mirrors  
• Bathroom/Washroom Mirrors

01902 791207 or 07737263611  
[info@mirrorsfortraining.co.uk](mailto:info@mirrorsfortraining.co.uk)  
[www.mirrorsfortraining.co.uk](http://www.mirrorsfortraining.co.uk)

**gymmirror.co.uk**

**WE SUPPLY & INSTALL GYM MIRRORS**

- ✓ Stock & bespoke sizes
- ✓ Installation service
- ✓ Fast reliable nationwide delivery

Call the experts at Aspect Safety Mirrors  
01223 263555  
email: [info@aspectsafetymirrors.co.uk](mailto:info@aspectsafetymirrors.co.uk)

**asm**  
aspect safety mirrors

## Lockers/Changing Rooms

**CRAFTSMAN**  
**CQL**  
QUALITY LOCKERS

**Create a great changing experience**

by providing Craftsman Lockers to fully meet your members' expectations

- Lockers
- Cubicles
- Vanity units
- Bench seating
- Treatment room furniture

**Call now:**  
**01480 405396**

To draw on the Craftsman experience in helping design changing rooms that work

**www.cqlockers.co.uk**

## Lockers/Changing Rooms continued



**FITLOCKERS**  
Quality Affordable Timber Lockers

**T: 01923 770435**  
sales@fitlockers.co.uk www.fitlockers.co.uk

**Go Keyless. Go KitLock.**



**No more lost keys!**  
Fit keyless locks to your lockers.

For a free site visit and consultation please call or email us now!  
**01635 239645**  
sales@kitlock.com

**Kit-LOCK**  
Coded Locker Solutions



**We're No.1 in lockers and cubicles.**

- Wide range of locker designs including laminate, glass and timber
- AutoCAD & Revit Facility
- Comprehensive selection of locking systems
- 3D visual rendering available

www.prospec.co.uk  
Email: sales@prospec.co.uk  
Tel: +44 (0) 1709 377147

**prospec**  
the Perfectionists

### COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Health Club Management is published 11 times a year by The Leisure Media Co Ltd, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1DJ, UK. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher The Leisure Media Co Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright holder, Cybertrek Ltd. Printed by Warners Midlands PLC. Distributed by Royal Mail Group Ltd and Whistl Ltd in the UK and Total Mail Ltd globally. ©Cybertrek Ltd 2015 ISSN 1361/3510. To subscribe to Health Club Management log on to www.leisuremedia.co.uk or email subs@leisuremedia.co.uk or call +44 1462 471930. Annual subscription rates are UK £45, Europe £57, rest of world £80, students (UK) £22.

## Lockers/Changing Rooms continued



**SAFE SPACE**

**Lockers  
Locking Systems  
Cubicles  
Washrooms  
Servicing  
3D Design  
Rendering**

info@safespacelockers.co.uk  
www.safespacelockers.co.uk  
Telephone: 0870 990 7989

**THE CHANGING ROOM EXPERTS**

## Sales & Marketing

**memberdrive** by 

**Want an extra 200 - 700 new members for free?**



**Call: 0115 777 3333**

## Software

  
**Your Business Our Solution**

The preferred IT partner driving success, participation and the highest standards in leisure



+44 (0)20 829 8900  
info@esp.com  
www.esp.com

**CRM • Bookings • Online & Mobile • Access Control • Kiosks  
Point of Sale • Business Intelligence • Courses & Achievements**

 **Club Assistant**  
Membership Software

**TAC** The Assistant Company  
www.tac.eu.com





# The right dose

Two new international studies shed some light on exercise guidelines, highlighting how much physical activity, and at what intensity, is best

**C**urrent physical activity guidelines for adults in the UK recommend 2.5 hours of moderate exercise – or 1.25 hours of vigorous exercise – a week. But just how frequently you need to work out to achieve optimum health, and how hard, remains unclear. Neither is it clear if there's an upper limit – at what point might we actually be doing too much exercise?

Two new studies, both of which were published in the *JAMA Internal Medicine* journal in April, reveal some interesting facts.

## Exercise frequency

In the larger of the two studies\*, the National Cancer Institute in the US collaborated with other research organisations to collate data on physical activity levels among 661,137 men and women. The people were from Europe and the US and had an average age of 62. They were categorised by the amount of exercise they did each week. The researchers then cross-referenced the exercise data with death rates among the group over a 14-year follow-up period.

People who were sedentary, doing no exercise, faced the highest risk of mortality. No surprises there.

However, even those whose moderate activity levels fell below the recommended guidelines of 2.5 hours a week – people who were at least doing something – still benefited from exercising: their risk of dying was reduced by 20 per cent when compared to those who were not active at all.

Longevity increased among those who met the minimum levels of exercise, or who did twice as much (between 2.5 and 5 hours a week): this group were 31 per cent less likely to pass away during the 14-year follow-up.

But the optimal results from exercise were seen among the people who engaged in three to five times the amount of activity recommended by the official guidelines (equating to 7.5–12.5 hours of leisurely activity a week): they had a 39 per cent lower risk of death.



7.5–12.5 hours' exercise a week is best, including vigorous activity

www.shutterstock.com/nentus

After that there was a plateau: the handful of people who took it to the extreme, working out 10 times more than the guidelines – or 20.5 hours a week – experienced no additional mortality benefit. However, neither was there any increased risk of death.

## Exercise intensity

In another study\*\*, researchers focused on correlation between the intensity of exercise and mortality rates over more than six years. It was based on 204,542 men and women in Australia who were aged 45 and older.

This time, people in the study were categorised in relation not only to how often they exercised, but also how hard they pushed themselves. The researchers compared those who engaged in only moderate activity – such

as a gentle swim, social tennis or household chores – to those who included at least some vigorous activity in their routine, such as jogging, aerobics or competitive tennis.

The results showed that achieving the recommended levels of exercise a week – even if it was just moderate intensity – lowered the risk of premature death.

However, the risk of early mortality was significantly lower for those who stepped it up a gear. People who spent up to 30 per cent of their weekly exercise time doing vigorous activity were 9 per cent less likely to die prematurely than those who only opted for more leisurely activities. Meanwhile, those who spent more than 30 per cent of their exercise time working out strenuously benefited even more – their risk of mortality was reduced by an extra 13 per cent over the moderate exercisers.

As with the other study, the researchers found no increased risk of early death when people exercised – even among those who worked out the most frequently and the most vigorously.

The take-home message? Any amount of exercise is good for you. But 7.5–12.5 hours of physical activity a week reaps the highest benefits in terms of life expectancy. And if up to 30 per cent of that time is spent working out vigorously, even better.

\*Arem H et al. Leisure Time Physical Activity and Mortality: A Detailed Pooled Analysis of the Dose-Response Relationship. *JAMA Intern Med.* April 2015

\*\*Gebel K et al. Effect of Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity on All-Cause Mortality in Middle-aged and Older Australians. *JAMA Intern Med.* April 2015



email: [svp@wtsinternational.com](mailto:svp@wtsinternational.com) web: [wtsinternational.com](http://wtsinternational.com)

# WTS International

**We design, brand, open  
and manage fitness centers**

We've been doing it for 40 years, for over  
300 fitness centers, recreation facilities  
and spas worldwide.

Call **+1 301.761.5803** to find out  
how we can help you.

WTS INTERNATIONAL



INTRODUCING

# **CYBEX** CARE

ASSET MANAGEMENT

For over 45 years, Cybex has combined customer insight with the latest technology to help customers succeed.

This year, we're introducing Cybex Care, a web-based asset management system that wirelessly collects cardio data, then uses it to help save you money, reduce equipment downtime and manage machine usage.

Managing your equipment has never been so simple. From your personal dashboard, keep track of equipment case status, usage trends and upcoming tasks.

Get extensive insight on machine usage and member preferences. See data as "miles run" or "hours used." Even project six-month patterns. Use this information to rotate low and high use equipment, keep your equipment in top condition, and ensure that your members are getting the best workout experiences possible.

## Cybex Care Benefits

### Improve Member Experience

By measuring usage trends you can ensure that your equipment is optimally positioned in the gym, in top condition, and always available to exceed your members' needs.

### Reduce Downtime & Optimise Performance

With advanced cardio insight, keep your equipment running perfectly and prevent disruptions before they occur.

### Streamline Maintenance & Service

Determine an optimal cleaning schedule. Train staff through instructional videos and task scheduling. Predict service needs and reduce service time.

### Lower Cost of Ownership

Through regularly scheduled maintenance and the rotation of low and high use machines, Cybex Care will help you extend the life of your equipment.

### Higher Standards

New standard features complement Cybex Care, making our premier cardio equipment even better: power cord retention hooks, side power switches and ez-grip coax cables.



T: 0845 606 0228

W: [www.cybexintl.com](http://www.cybexintl.com)

TW: @CybexUK