

# health club management

APRIL 2009 £4.00

## TAKING IT PERSONALLY

THE GROWTH OF  
PERSONAL TRAINING IN  
CLUBS AND STUDIOS

INTERVIEW

## PRADEEP RAJAN

The CEO of GSSG on plans  
for a global fitness business

## OLDER EXERCISERS

IS YOUR FACILITY GEARED UP  
TO CATER FOR THIS MARKET?

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT...

## THE CHANGE4LIFE CAMPAIGN

HOW CAN WE ENSURE WE TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY?



The official  
publication  
of the FIA



Change media  
company  
association

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







A word on  
**SPORTS  
NUTRITION.**

*We've used our  
experience from  
working with top  
athletes to develop a*

**NEW  
RANGE**

*of products  
that can help drive  
growth in this*

*£250 million category.<sup>1</sup>*

*Sport's evolved.*

*So have we.*

*Give your business  
the edge, choose*

**LUCOZADE  
SPORT.**



PROVEN TO GIVE YOU AN **EDGE**

LUCOZADE, LUCOZADE SPORT and HYDRO ACTIVE are registered trade marks of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies.



## WHAT WILL LUCOZADE SPORT BRING TO THE SPORTS NUTRITION CATEGORY?

Existing products in the sports nutrition category are often perceived as:	The NEW range of sports nutrition products from Lucozade Sport offers:
<b>Confusing</b>	<b>A credible trusted brand</b>
<b>Unnatural, unnecessary and unsafe</b>	<b>Leadership in safe sports nutrition</b>
<b>Poor tasting</b>	<b>Taste superiority</b>
<b>Inaccessible</b>	<b>New users to market</b>

**The sports nutrition category is traditionally consumed by body builders who make up just 8% of sports and exercise participants.**

**Lucozade Sport nutrition will be targeting the remaining 92% of sports and exercise participants who want to improve their performance and fitness.**

Source: ThreeSixtyResearch "consumer, brand and retail understanding of the sports nutrition category"

## MERCHANDISING RECOMMENDATIONS

Educate your consumers and maximise your sales in store with the following tools:

- **Need State Wheels**
- **Z-Cards**
- **POS**



Pull Up Banner



Poster



Need State Wheel



Counter Top Unit



Display Unit

**The Lucozade Sport range will be supported with a massive £18m marketing spend**



PROVEN TO GIVE YOU AN **EDGE**

LUCOZADE, LUCOZADE SPORT and HYDRO ACTIVE are registered trade marks of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies.



# NEW

**Lucozade Sport is proud to present a new range of sports nutrition products to satisfy these need states:**



**Lucozade Sport will be increasing its range to 35 SKUs which will include drinks, powders, bars, gels and tablets in a range of sizes, formats and flavour variants.**

**At Lucozade Sport we work with top athletes and sports scientists to ensure quality and credibility, helping to bring in new users to the brand.**

**Launch date: May 09**



**PROVEN TO GIVE YOU AN **EDGE****

LUCOZADE, LUCOZADE SPORT and HYDRO ACTIVE are registered trade marks of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies.





## 'giving' advice

As the impact of the recession bites and operators tighten their belts – either to maintain growth in profitability or to stem decreases in income – the matter of how much advice is given to members for free, and how much is paid for as an extra through personal training, becomes more of an issue.

Although some clubs, especially those with well-established and loyal memberships, are managing to maintain or even grow their membership numbers, others are seeing a decline in their direct debits. This is leading in turn to decreases in staffing levels and pressure to find alternative sources of revenue for the business, as well as to develop other income streams for the gym floor staff who remain within the business.

I visited a club recently and was talking with one of the instructors to see what kind of help I'd get if I joined. The instructor was initially very helpful, telling me the type of support on offer, but then clammed up, saying: "I can't tell you all this, or you won't have any reason to pay for personal training."

None of the advice he was giving was particularly specialised or high level, but the club had obviously made the decision to give only the most basic supervision as part of the membership fee, and then to upsell personal training to create an extra revenue stream. The fact that both sets of advice were being offered by the same person, with a financial incentive to recommend personal training, created a real conflict of interest.

Although it's vital that clubs are able to fight the downturn, finding new ways to generate revenue by enhancing member services, we need to be careful that we don't undermine the core offer in doing so.

If we're to be successful in attracting more non-exercisers into our clubs, we must make sure they're well supervised, ensuring they

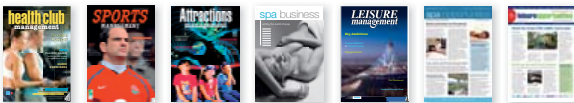
get the results they need, feel well looked after and choose to continue their memberships. Withholding basic advice when it's one of the expectations of members, in an attempt to sell personal training, is a short-term approach that could be harmful to reputations.

So what level of guidance should members expect, when does it become appropriate to charge extra for advice, and how do we avoid putting staff in a difficult position by incentivising them to withhold advice? We need to be clear on all these points so we don't mislead new joiners.

Clearly, some of the new budget clubs won't offer much, if any, support, but the majority of clubs still offer access to gym staff as part of the basic membership fee. Unless it's made clear to new members that advice isn't included in the price of membership, the basics should include an induction and ideally a fitness test, personalised aim setting, the creation of an appropriate programme, advice on how to use the equipment, coaching to ensure that this advice is followed, access to expertise to answer any questions relating to this, and then regular reviews to update the aims and programme. Clubs that really want to grow their memberships will also include a motivational element.

The grey areas come about where clubs take a fee, which the customer is led to believe includes support, and are then half-hearted in giving this help in a bid to grow personal training revenues.

**Liz Terry, editor**  
email: [healthclub@leisuremedia.com](mailto:healthclub@leisuremedia.com)



NEWS AND JOBS UPDATED DAILY ON THE INTERNET [leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://leisureopportunities.co.uk)

CONTACT US The Leisure Media Company Ltd, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1DJ UK  
SUBS Tel: +44 (0)1462 471915 Fax: +44 (0)1462 433909 © Cybertrek Ltd 2009

FRONT COVER WWW.STOCK.COM  
Subscriptions  
Julie Albone  
+44 (0)1462 471915  
Circulation Manager  
Michael Emmerson  
+44 (0)1462 471932  
Editor  
Liz Terry  
+44 (0)1462 431385  
Managing Editor  
Kate Cracknell  
+44 (0)1462 471906  
Assistant Editor  
Katie Barnes  
+44 (0)1462 471925  
Journalist  
Caroline Wilkinson  
+44 (0)1462 471911  
News Desk  
Tom Walker  
+44 (0)1462 471934  
Sarah Todd  
+44 (0)1462 471927  
Caroline Wilkinson  
+44 (0)1462 471911  
Pete Hayman  
+44 (0)1462 471938  
Products Editor  
Martin Nash  
+44 (0)1462 471933  
Mark Edmonds  
+44 (0)1462 471933  
Designers  
Claire Toplis  
+44 (0)1462 471910  
Andy Bundy  
+44 (0)1462 471924  
Ed Gallagher  
+44 (0)1905 20198  
Website Team  
Michael Paramore  
+44 (0)1462 471926  
Dean Fox  
+44 (0)1462 471900  
Tim Nash  
+44 (0)1462 471917  
Katie Eldridge  
+44 (0)1462 471913  
Publisher  
Jan Williams  
+44 (0)1462 471909  
Sales  
John Challinor  
+44 (0)1582 607970  
Tessa Alexander  
+44 (0)1462 471903  
Nadeem Shaikh  
+44 (0)1462 471902  
Julie Badrick  
+44 (0)1462 471919  
Nuzhat Hayat  
01604 415414  
Marketing Manager  
Jennifer Todd  
+61 3 9694 5213  
Financial Controller  
Sue Davis  
+44 (0)1395 519398  
Financial Administrator  
Denise Gildea  
+44 (0)1462 471930  
Credit Controller  
Shona Axford  
+44 (0)1876 580347



# welcome to HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT



Boxing continues to pack a punch p32



The business of personal training p36

## contents

### 06 letters

Shouldn't we be highlighting the positives when we talk to kids about exercise? asks ZigZag's James Porter

### 08 news round-up

Designs revealed for Plymouth's Life Centre, and operator Time Fitness launches an equipment distribution arm in partnership with Star Trac

### 14 international news

Frankfurt's 10th Fitness First, South American deals for Technogym, and 'fitness rooms' in Cape Town

### 16 fia update

Steven Ward provides an update on the national Physical Activity Alliance

### 20 reps update

Details of the new entry structure

### 22 people news

Simon Wright is Pineapple Europe MD, and Lisa Taylor moves to MEND



GSSG's plans for the UK market p28

### 24 competitive edge

Run in a virtual race around Australia and New Zealand, ride zip wires in Scotland or bike ride in Madagascar

### 25 diary dates

Get ready for FIBO, SIBEC UK and Club Industry East

### 26 everyone's talking about... change4life

What can health clubs do to make the most of the opportunities presented by the government's Change4Life campaign?

### 28 interview pradeep rajan

The CEO of Qatar-based GSSG talks about the group's plans to expand its fitness business globally

### 32 it's a knockout

We report on the ever-increasing popularity of boxing-inspired fitness at health clubs across the UK

### 36 taking it personally

We investigate the growth in personal training, both in the shape of standalone studios, and clubs where the business model is weighted heavily towards PT

### 40 leading by example

Caroline Wilkinson visits the new gym at the DCSF to find out if government is practising what it preaches when it comes to fitness

### 44 mind games

Research shows that regular exercise can enhance cognitive capacity of older people and help fight the onset of diseases such as Alzheimer's

### 46 all together now

Group exercise promotes loyalty among members, but what does it take to create an effective class schedule? We round up some best practice examples and advice



Mystery shopping Gymbox p54

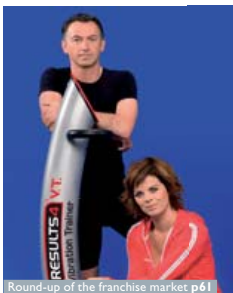




Off-the-shelf weight loss packages p56



Are you ready for older members? p50



Round-up of the franchise market p61

## 50 new perspective

Colin Milner, CEO of the International Council on Active Aging, outlines ways in which facilities can make sure they cater for older people

## 54 thinking outside the box

We mystery shop the third Gymbox site, located at Bank in London

## 56 the weighting game

Equipment manufacturers are developing weight management programmes for operators to buy off-the-shelf to use with members

## 61 franchise round-up

An in-depth look at the movers and shakers in the franchise market

## 66 new lease of life

In this time of economic uncertainty, is leasing an option that operators should consider? We report

## 69 retention returns

We take a look at some of the retention software systems on the market and ask how they can enhance an operator's bottom line

## 72 fitness-kit.net special uniforms and gymwear

New options from Corporate Trends, Simon Jersey and P81

## 74 supplier profile steve wright, scifit

The MD of SCFIT UK talks about the company's medical heritage and its status as an IFI R&D associate

## 77 show preview fibo 2009

Make your way to Essen for Europe's largest health and fitness trade show

## 83 lightweights

The restaurant that's keeping an eye on what customers eat, and are you serving the right biscuits at meetings?



The official publication of the Fitness Industry Association  
+44 (0)20 7420 8560

## reader services



## digital magazine

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 p78





# 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)

## we must focus on positives to encourage kids to exercise

The media constantly bombard us with Doomsday predictions about the health of our nation and the painful futures our inactive, overweight children face. I've started to wonder what impact this has on the children themselves. What are the psychological implications for kids who are constantly fed explicit details of the dire consequences of not eating well, or not being active? Do these scare tactics really work? Do they motivate our kids and help educate their parents?

I work alongside some fantastic fitness professionals who emphasise the importance of highlighting the positives when getting a potential customer to

'buy into' a product. When selling healthy living to our kids, should we constantly focus on the negatives? Shouldn't we put more time and effort into focusing on the positives: the freedom that healthy living can provide, the health benefits they will enjoy and the fun they can have?

Dr John Ratey from Harvard University revealed that exercising for at least 20 minutes a day can lead to increased mental abilities among school kids. A US high school put this theory to the test by training PE with literacy programmes to help students with reading difficulties. Students set their alarm clocks 45 minutes early to take part in the 7am 'Zero Hour' PE class, followed by a literacy class. Both parents and teachers saw a difference in the test scores and attitude of the classmates involved. A similar initiative was introduced at a Hampshire secondary school, where a 7.30am 'Fit 4 Learning' scheme has seen outstanding results.

We need to put more effort into highlighting the positives, telling children that exercise can give them more energy, improve their sense of wellbeing, enable them to take part in exciting activities and even make them brainer!

**james porter**

training & programming director, zigzag



Why not tell kids exercising is fun?



Can equipment draw people to pilates?

**pilates: results are the key**

I read with interest the article in the last issue outlining the benefits that non-pilates specific kit – such as GRAVITY, Kinesis and vibration platforms – can bring to a pilates programme. I question per se the role that any equipment will play in turning clients on to pilates.

At STOTT PILATES, we hold the belief that small, easily available gym accessories such as fit balls, toning bands, foam rollers and so on are an excellent way to introduce our pilates concepts to all exercisers; trained pilates instructors and fitness professionals are encouraged to access our workshops and DVDs to implement this type of basic programming into their clients' workouts.

Once basic concepts have been taught, the success of a pilates programme has much to do with the instructor's ability to understand client goals and deliver a solution – "I used to suffer from back ache, but my pilates instructor worked with me to solve this". Only once pilates instructors have the knowledge and self-confidence to deliver results will members choose to move away from group classes. At this point, existing gym machines may help to hold interest and add to enjoyment, but it will be the well-taught pilates method that truly inspires clients.

Where clubs invest in pilates instructors who can deliver results, the demand for the pilates programme will itself dictate the choice of equipment. As Ken Endelman said, this will generally be toward equipment "designed to meet specific method principles".

**chris onslow**

md, pilates solutions ltd

## the letter of the law

**Taking early legal advice can often prevent a problem becoming a dispute. The team at Croner Consulting answers readers' questions**

**Q** I have disputed part of my supplier's invoice, and am refusing to pay any of it until the dispute is resolved. The supplier is now demanding late payment interest on the undisputed amount. Can he?

**A** Yes. The purpose of the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act was to encourage the prompt payment of commercial debts by allowing the creditor to demand a punitive rate of interest on unpaid debts (8 per cent over bank base rate). In the case of *Ruttle Plant Hire Ltd v DEFRA*, the Court of Appeal last week ruled that it was unfair for a company (in that case DEFRA) to withhold the entire payment for goods and services just because part of the debt was disputed; a party can withhold payment for sums reasonably in doubt, but he cannot pay nothing at all and expect to escape the punitive interest imposed by the Act on the balance which is due.

**CRONER**  
CONSULTING



# DEVELOPMENT

## MAXIMIZE YOUR CLIENTS POTENTIAL AS WELL AS YOUR OWN PROFITABILITY.

A great number of your clients may not be consuming sufficient protein and as a result may not be seeing the results they envisaged.

Whilst energy drinks have application, protein drinks can dramatically improve results in the gym. Whey Refresh is perfect for developing and maintaining lean muscle.

It couldn't be easier to understand as a product; 40 grams of protein in filtered water with great natural flavours.

It is ideal as a proven way of introducing new users to supplementation.

The sports cap and bottle makes this the most convenient and familiar format available for first time users.

From the gyms perspective, it is easy for staff to sell, vends and has a great profit margin. Free fridges are also available.

## FOR MUSCLES, FOR BUSINESS.

RRP 500ml £2.99, 3 great flavours; orange burst, tropical punch and rhubarb.

## REFLEX RADIO

Please visit [www.reflex-nutrition.com](http://www.reflex-nutrition.com) to listen to Reflex Radio, the radio station that combines chart music with generic information on supplementation. Ideal to play in the gym.

Call our sales team on 0870 757 3353 for details and quote HCM for free samples. Free branded fridges available on first order of 60 bottles or more.



**FREE  
MP3**

**WORKOUT  
ALBUM**

Visit the Reflex Radio  
page on our website



**reflex**<sup>®</sup>  
Tomorrow's Nutrition Today<sup>™</sup>



## in brief...

**£11m centre for gosport**

Gosport Borough Council has shortlisted four developers for its proposed £11m leisure facility, to replace the existing Holbrook Recreation Centre.

Having received more than 17 expressions of interest, the council has narrowed the list down to four and is expected to make a decision by December 2009.

The new facility will offer a 25m, six-lane swimming pool and teaching pool, a 200-seat spectator area, a four-court sports hall, a fitness suite with 60–100 stations, a sauna and steamroom, and a floodlit synthetic sports pitch. A crèche, a café, a function area, and dry and wet changing rooms will also be included.

**afan lido to be replaced?**

Neath Port Talbot Council has announced that the Afan Lido on the Aberavon Seafront is to be either refurbished or replaced.

Council leader Derek Vaughan said, in his budget speech, that the council planned to look at options for securing top-class facilities for the Afan Lido site in the future.

The 50-year-old complex currently boasts a swimming pool, a fitness suite, a 700-seat sports hall and an indoor bowls stadium, as well as restaurants and bars. A public consultation will be undertaken in order to ascertain what measures will be taken.

**revamp for fullwell cross**

Work is due to begin on a £350,000 redevelopment of the Fullwell Cross Leisure Centre in Essex.

Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure Trust, which operates the centre, has appointed Alliance Leisure as project manager to the scheme, which will include transforming the existing café into a new health suite as well as the creation of a new mezzanine floor.

The revamp will create a new 42-station gym and will more than double the centre's fitness areas. The gym will be fitted out with products supplied by Life Fitness.

## life centre designs revealed

Designs for the £46.5m Life Centre in Plymouth have been unveiled by Archial – formerly SMC Charter Architects.

A full planning application has been submitted to the city council for the leisure scheme, which will be located in the city's main parkland.

If successful, the centre will boast a 150-station health and fitness suite with a sauna and a steamroom, as well as a youth gym. Multi-purpose areas will also provide space for dance and martial arts and a crèche, complemented by a café open to all park visitors.

The hub will also include a 10-lane, 50m swimming pool with moveable floors, as well as a leisure pool with a beach-style entry, a bubble pool and two flume rides. Additional facilities will include a 15m, all-weather climbing

facility with an aerial assault course on the exterior of the building, an eight-lane indoor bowling arena and a 12-court multi-use sports hall.

The project – funded by the council and the University of Plymouth, which is contributing £2.5m – was designed in co-operation with engineering consultants ARUP, council officers and more than 50 stakeholder groups, including Sport England and the Plymouth Sports Forum.

Council leader Vivien Pengelly says: "The design team has used lots of focus groups to ensure that the Life Centre meets the leisure needs of the whole community, from toddlers to the elderly, families, schools and sports clubs."

If approved, construction work will start on the site in late autumn 2009.

The £46.5m leisure hub will be built in Plymouth's main parkland



## £12.5m wellbeing hub proposed

The historic Govanhill Baths in Glasgow could be transformed into a £12.5m wellbeing centre, following its closure by the council in 2001.



Proposed refurb designed to benefit the socially disadvantaged area

Since 2004, Govanhill Baths Community Trust has lobbied Glasgow City Council for permission to refurbish the B-listed Edwardian building as a leisure and community hub to help improve the lives of those living in the surrounding socially disadvantaged area.

Designed by NORD Architecture, the proposed hub includes a new swimming pool with a spa area comprising Turkish Baths, a hydrotherapy pool, physiotherapy and exercise rooms, and spa pools.

The 340sq m health suite will feature nine therapy rooms and a gym, while a 130sq m multi-use hall will provide space for badminton and martial arts. If planning permission is granted, construction is expected to begin in March 2010.





The £35m complex will include a 50m competition-sized swimming pool

## basildon village gets go-a-head

Plans for a new £35m sports and fitness complex in Basildon, Essex, have been given the green light by Basildon Council.

The new Basildon Sporting Village, which has already been named as a potential pre-Games training camp for the London 2012 Olympics, is set to include a 50m competition-sized swimming pool with a moveable wall. There will also be seating for 400 spectators, a 9m x 17m learner pool, an eight-court sports hall and a 500-station fitness suite with changing facilities and a fitness assessment and referrals room.

A gymnastics centre will incorporate a specialist main hall, a training hall and changing facilities. Additional features

include a multi-purpose studio, meeting rooms, a climbing wall, as well as six floodlit five-a-side football pitches and a new 750-seat athletics stand.

Funding for the £35m scheme is being provided by Essex County Council, the Housing and Communities Agency, Sport England, and Veolia ES Cleanaway Pitsea Marshes Trust.

Stephen Horgan, the council's cabinet member for development and regeneration, says: "This is a rare opportunity to build a world-class sporting complex that will offer all our people state-of-the-art facilities. The centre will become a sporting hub for the whole community."

## sheffield's people's place receives £2.1m grant

The Department for Children, Schools and Families has awarded a £2.1m funding package towards the construction of the People's Place project in Sheffield.

Designed as an activity centre for 13- to 19-year-olds, the People's Place aims to bring young people together and prevent anti-social behaviour by providing a range of leisure activities – both cultural and sporting.

To promote physical activity, the £3.6m centre will include an outdoor

fitness trail, artificial football pitches and a free-to-access health and fitness club.

To cater for youths with artistic interests, the centre will also offer access to recording studio technology.

The project is led by Sheffield City Council and co-ordinated under a joint working group called The Sharrow Partnership. The facilities and design of the centre have been largely decided by local youths during public consultations.

**BRING  
FITNESS  
2 LIFE**

## GAIN POUNDS WHILST THEY LOSE THEM

The Concept2 Model E elevates everything – workouts, fitness levels, even where your clients sit. We've raised the bar, added a sturdier frame and a nickel plated chain for even lower maintenance. And when it comes to tracking progress, the new PM4 monitor is bursting with performance data at the touch of a button. **Call us now to find out how Concept2 can help pull in your profits.**

[bringfitness2life.co.uk](http://bringfitness2life.co.uk)



**0115 945 5522**





## in brief...

**new pool for ucp marlon?**

Plymouth City Council is deciding whether to give a £1.2m funding boost to plans for the complete overhaul of swimming facilities at University College Plymouth St Mark and St John (UCP Marjon).

The scheme will form part of a wider redevelopment of the college's sports facilities, which includes the expansion of the existing 900sq m sports centre – to 6,253sq m – in a bid to improve sports facilities for students and the local community.

**epic upgrade for ellesmere**

The outdated Epic Leisure Centre in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, is to be replaced by a new facility located on an alternative site in the town.

According to a detailed feasibility study by consultants Strategic Leisure, the centre is in such a bad state of repair that the potential benefits of a complete refurbishment have been ruled out.

Two sites for the new centre are being considered. Proposals for the new centre include a 25m, eight-lane swimming pool and a large learner pool with seating for 400 spectators, as well as a six-court sports hall, a fitness suite, two studios, a crèche and a cafeteria.



**Complex will be built in association with NHS Bolton and the university**

## £30m sports centre for biz

Bolton Council is considering closing the town's publicly-funded leisure centre as it prepares to develop a new £30m swimming facility. The project is part of a £300m local regeneration scheme called Bolton Innovation Zone (BIZ).

The future of the Excel Centre at Bolton Community College is being reviewed, as the council intends to create a facility in association with NHS Bolton and the University of Bolton. The new 13,000sq m sports complex could include an eight-lane, 25m swimming pool with a 250-seat spectator area, a fitness suite, an aerobics studio and a hydrotherapy pool.

## tone improves fitness offerings

Sports trust Tone Leisure has completed a £0.7m redevelopment project to extend fitness facilities at three leisure centres in the Taunton Deane area.

Work began on Wellington Sports Centre, Wellsprings Leisure Centre and Blackbrook Pavilion in August 2008.

Wellington Sports Centre has had its gym extended to create a 240sq m, 45-station fitness suite with new Precor equipment. An under-used steam and sauna area at Wellsprings Leisure Centre has been converted into a 375sq m gym with 70 stations, at a cost of £240,000. Meanwhile, a £400,000 investment at Blackbrook Pavilion saw two squash courts and a studio converted into a 350sq m, 75-station fitness suite equipped by the PTE group. The former 200sq m gym has been turned into a new studio.



**Blackbrook Pavilion acquired a new 75-station fitness suite**

# GET WITH THE PROGRAMME!



GROUP STRENGTH • PILATES • PERSONAL TRAINING • POST-REHAB

There's no defying the law of **GRAVITY**. Four great programmes on one amazing piece of award-winning equipment. The GTS is your business differential with a guaranteed return on investment and full marketing support. Leasing options, training and in-club demos available now.







Paul Bodger and Josh Bicknell will take on distribution of Star Trac in Scotland

## star trac's scottish distributor

Scottish gym chain Time Fitness has launched a distribution company, Anytime Leisure, in partnership with Star Trac®.

Based in Cupar, Fife, Anytime Leisure has been set up specifically to offer a Scottish-focused fitness solution to improve sales, service and support for new and existing Star Trac clients.

Although liaising closely with the Star Trac UK office, Anytime Leisure will use a network of independent service providers and will add their own service engineers later in the year to provide an enhanced service support and quick turnaround.

Paul Bodger, co-owner of Time Fitness and Anytime Leisure, says: "We felt

Scotland was never given the focus it deserved by the main fitness equipment or solution providers. All focus is given to the Midlands and south of England, and lower service levels are usually the result, often coupled with much higher costs for delivery, installation and equipment.

"Our goal is to offer an experienced and locally-based company delivering a higher service level at a more reasonable cost. We have already been able to pick up customers due to problems they had experienced with other providers."

Anytime Leisure offers gym design and consultancy services, sales, gym support and leisure club management services.

## europe gets a slice of pineapple

US-based Pineapple Fitness has launched Pineapple Europe to distribute its range of vibration training products in Europe.

Simon Wright, former MD of FitLinx, has been appointed European MD (see p22). Wright will work alongside director Gary Marshall, formerly of Technogym, and David Seymour, who joined Pineapple from his previous position as sales director of Aspria Holdings.

Pineapple's low-frequency vibration platforms are designed for use in core training, yoga, pilates and studio classes.

## matrix meets ifi standards

A selection of Matrix cardiovascular and resistance equipment has been awarded Stage 2 accreditation from the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI).

Matrix recently modified its Johnson C8000 Upright Bike, R8000 Recumbent Bike and T8000 Treadmill, as well as its leg extension, leg press and seated leg curl, to meet the needs of disabled and non-disabled exercisers alike.



Visit us at FIBO  
23-26 April  
Hall 3, Stand C27

## ACTIVE AGEING: EXERCISE FOR OLDER ADULTS

Being active is vital at any age but increasingly, older adults understand how exercise can enable them to remain independent and prevent the onset of medical conditions associated with a later life. As an Inclusive Research Associate, SCIFIT understands the needs of the seniors market and with a number of its cardio machines IFI accredited at Stage 2, they are one of the leading suppliers of functional inclusive fitness equipment for older adults. Exclusive to SCIFIT, the REX™ Total Body Recumbent Elliptical offers a smooth and natural movement that allows comfortable, effective exercise.

SCIFIT Ltd UK  
Tel 01344 300022  
Email [info@scifit.uk.com](mailto:info@scifit.uk.com)





At a time when it is supposed to be getting warmer you will notice that many people, particularly runners, will be heading outdoors to exercise. If you know running well, this is expected.

March puts many within touching distance of the Flora London Marathon and is synonymous with runners increasing the volume of training in preparation for the challenge ahead.

The challenge itself remains a serious one; analysis by the LSSA on last year's Flora London Marathon revealed that 23,000 of the 35,000 runners took longer than four hours to complete the 26.1 miles – by definition an ultraendurance event! On average runners were 17 minutes slower in the second half of the marathon compared to the first and 85% of runners opted to set off at a seemingly unsustainable pace.

The importance of fuel and hydration strategies during marathon training and competition can not be underestimated. Fuel meaning you ensure that your body, and more specifically muscles, have enough energy to get you across the line and hydration meaning that you maintain the right balance of fluids and electrolytes during and after exercise.

A 2009 entrant myself, I know I require all the help I can get and acknowledge the need for well formulated sports drinks both in training and on the big day. That way I hope to avoid being one of the 85%!

#### Nick Morgan

Head of Sport Science for Lucozade Sport

The LSSA has extensive knowledge from over 30 years of experience in sports nutrition research. [www.thelssa.com](http://www.thelssa.com)

## training

## news

### online boxing training launched

FitPro has joined up with boxing world champion David Haye and his trainer, Adam Booth, to offer a teaching programme accredited by the British Boxing Board of Control (see p34).

The three-phase Outbox™ programme has been developed specifically for trainers and instructors working in the leisure and fitness industry. The first phase is delivered entirely online.

Level one covers the fundamentals of boxing and is aimed at existing personal trainers and instructors to ensure boxing techniques are used correctly. The course is delivered through video and staged progression, followed by an online exam to test understanding.

Level two and three will be delivered face-to-face and will launch this autumn and winter respectively, and are only available for people who have completed



**Part one of the Outbox qualification will be delivered exclusively online**

level one. These qualifications will focus on developing advanced choreography using defence, footwork, rhythm and head movements.

When completed, trainers will be fully accredited and able to deliver boxing sessions to clients. Like all FitPro courses, Outbox qualifies successful participants for REPs points.

### Ilc named centre of excellence for operations

Crystal Palace-based London Leisure College (LLC) has been named Centre of Excellence in Leisure Operations for London by the National Skills Academy for Sport and Active Leisure.

LLC is now a premium provider of health and fitness training and will be responsible for delivering qualifications in leisure operations, including the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification, first aid, pool plant operations and customer service.



**LLC will deliver the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification**

### gatorade fuels spinning training



**Free Spinning training for clubs that buy 12-month supply of Britvic drinks**

Isotonic sports drink supplier Gatorade is partnering with US-based indoor cycling provider The Spinning® Program to offer free training for health and fitness staff.

Britvic Soft Drinks, the UK distributor of Gatorade, is offering clubs and fitness centres the chance to put one staff member through a two-day Spinning® instructor training course worth £350.

Trainees will become qualified instructors and will also have access to a continuing education programme. To qualify, facilities must simply commit to a 12-month supply of Britvic drinks or vending machines in their gym.

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM





# Struggling

with your  
youth activity  
solutions?



time for a **SHOKK**

**10 YEARS**

of The Complete Youth Activity Solution



1999 - 2009

[www.shokk.co.uk](http://www.shokk.co.uk)  
[info@shokk.co.uk](mailto:info@shokk.co.uk)  
0161 877 7870



## in brief...

**strata: continued growth**

Strata Partners has built its third club in the city of Rostov-on-Don, in the south of Russia.

The 2,000sq m club, located in a shopping centre in a residential district, will open in the summer. It offers a gym equipped by gym80 and Motis, three group exercise studios, a kids' club and a beauty salon.

"The economic crisis is not a reason to stop development," says a company spokesperson. "The criteria for project selection just have to become stricter than ever."

**virgin's australian plans**

Richard Branson officially opened Virgin Active's first site in Australia at the end of February. The French Forest club, in Sydney, opened in December and has already attracted 3,000 members. A second club, in Melbourne's central business district, is due to open in May.

**dir donates to prisons**

Barcelona-based health club operator DiR recently donated 80 pieces of fitness equipment to gyms located in prisons across the region.

Albert Batlle, Secretary of the Penitentiary, Rehabilitation and Juvenile Justice Services of the autonomous government of Catalonia, says: "Participating in sport and taking care of the body is beneficial for inmates' physical and psychological health" – 40 per cent of inmates use the gyms, and DiR has donated 440 machines since 2005.

**keiser enters italy**

Keiser has entered the Italian market, taking on Davide Canè as its distributor. Canè has a background in manufacturing; his company produces a range of products including, in the fitness arena, aqua bikes/treadmills.

"I've loved Keiser equipment since I first saw it in 2001," says Canè. "The Italian market is led by Technogym, but I'm very confident that we will conquer our share of the market with our unique line of products based on research and experience with professional athletes."

## no.10 for fitness first frankfurt

Fitness First opened its 10th club in Frankfurt, Germany, last month.

Located in My Zeil, a shopping centre in the middle of the city, the 4,000sq m, 6,000-member capacity club cost around €5m to build. Facilities include a fitness suite with 46 CV and 98 resistance stations, plus 21 personal trainers. As



The new premium site offers a pool

a Platinum (premium) site, there is also a swimming pool, an extensive group exercise offering and a wellness area with sauna and steamrooms.

For an extra fee, a separate area for 'Black Label' members offers special services such as a separate changing room, towels, bath robes, sport clothes by Nike, a concierge, terrace and private car park. The club is one of only three Fitness First sites worldwide to offer this; the others are in Sydney and Berlin.

Suppliers to the new club are Life Fitness, Technogym, Star Trac, Power Plate, Nautilus, Concept2, Pro Sport, Elbe Sport, MFT and MF Sport.

Fitness First also opened a new club in Breda, Holland, in late December 2008, with 1,200 members and five personal trainers.

## 700th hilton fitness by precor

More than 700 Hilton Fitness By Precor facilities have now opened globally since the brand was launched at the end of 2006, making it one of the world's largest health and fitness brands.

Hilton Fitness By Precor gyms have already been established in a number of far-flung locations – including Guam in the Pacific Ocean, Fujairah in the UAE, Abuja in Nigeria and Papagayo in Costa Rica – with another 150 facilities scheduled to open during 2009.

Recent guest surveys conducted by the Hilton Hotels Corporation found that hotels offering Hilton Fitness By Precor facilities saw increases of up to 45 per cent in overall guest satisfaction.



Hilton Fitness By Precor, Costa Rica

## holmes place opens fifth club in madrid

Holmes Place opened its fifth club in Madrid in February.

The luxurious 4,800sq m club is located on the fourth floor of the Palacio de Hielo shopping centre. Facilities include a gym equipped by Star Trac and Life Fitness, with personal training also on offer. There is also a pilates studio, a stainless steel swimming pool, a solarium, a sauna and Turkish baths, an outdoor spa pool with impressive views across the city, a café and a beauty centre.

The club has a modern design with light, open spaces throughout. Beatriz del Rio, club director, says: "We were looking to create a tranquil yet energising atmosphere, with architecture that inspires members to optimise their time while they train."

Holmes Place Iberia, which encompasses the Holmes Place and Europolis brands, now has 29 clubs in Spain and Portugal – 12 of which are located in Madrid, Barcelona, La Coruña and Zaragoza.





The new flagship site for Chilean operator O2 launched at the end of January

## technogym in south america

The fitness industry in Santiago, capital city of Chile, is being shaken up by the expansion plans of a recent arrival.

In January 2008, the Zegers/de Goyeneche family, already major shareholders in one health club in the city, acquired local operator Go Fitness as a means of cementing their position in the local fitness market. The Go Fitness facility has now been transformed into a flagship club for the family's new brand, O2, which opened in the centre of Santiago on 31 January.

Facilities at the 3,500sq m club include a fitness suite equipped by Technogym, a spa with medical area, a swimming pool, a solarium, and a natural food offering.

O2 has since acquired two further sites in Santiago, including one exclusive hotel-based club, and has plans for further expansion in the city.

Meanwhile the Technogym-equipped Life Fitness Centre, on Venezuela's Isla Margarita, opened in February.

The 1,200sq m club offers a health and fitness area, a coffee bar and a terrace overlooking the ocean.

Selected by the investor to supply all equipment – including Kinesis – Technogym also worked with the designers to create the layout for the gym, including cardio and indoor cycling zones that allow members to look out across the ocean as they work out.

## fitness rooms at cape town hotel

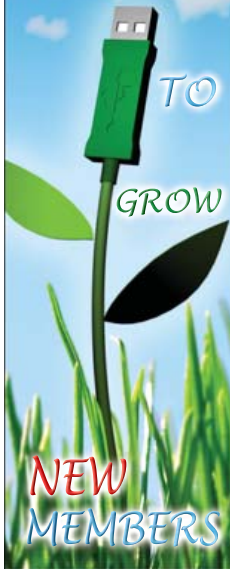
Vineyard Hotel & Spa in Cape Town, South Africa, is trialling an in-room fitness concept in conjunction with Star Trac.

Originally built in 1799, the hotel is currently undergoing redevelopment, with 32 new rooms being built in addition to refurbishments to nine existing rooms. These 41 rooms are all being designed with the option to turn them into 'fitness rooms' – the hotel is, as general manager Roy Davies explains, located next to Newlands rugby ground and hosts many athletes who like to be able to exercise in their own time.

The concept will be trialled in five rooms from August; each will be kitted out with a Star Trac eSpinner and a Wii Fit. If demand is sufficient, the hotel will increase the number of fitness rooms available and will start to market the concept to a wider audience – Davies believes it will also appeal to those not confident enough to exercise in the gym.

The initiative will complement the fitness offering already available at the hotel, where the gym is managed by Chris van Loggerenberg, former fitness trainer to the South African rugby team.

NEW  
WAYS  
TO  
GROW



NEW  
MEMBERS

"...CFM's new online signup programme combined with their hard hitting guerrilla marketing techniques makes a welcome addition to our member base..!"

**CREATIVE FITNESS  
MARKETING**

AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND UNITED KINGDOM IRELAND USA CANADA



[www.creativefitness.net](http://www.creativefitness.net)

Call Dave Wright  
or Chevy Kelly  
to find out how  
0870-270-6667



## from the board



**tony majakas**  
uk md • technogym

At Technogym, wellness is our mission, which is why we're delighted that the Department of Health has made the pursuit of wellness a core ambition. The new Physical Activity Strategy – Be Active Be Healthy – must be acknowledged as a real milestone for both the country and the industry.

The strategy outlines the simple fact that the government needs us to help it achieve its public health ambitions. The good news for everyone who has invested in the FIA, and its Vanguard Group, is that the government's current public health strategy is a timely validation of our industry's focus on shaping debates in Whitehall. It is proof that the industry is making more progress in the corridors of power, and at a level never achieved before.

Given the tough economic climate, however, we must reconsider the industry's long-term strategy. I believe local government, via PCTs, want us to succeed – but I fear we are not positioned correctly to reap these benefits. We must review our current corporate structures and realise the power that leads to funding has been placed in the hands of local government.

Unless we adapt and build our local capability, we will struggle to unlock this potential. We must now show a willingness to try new things, because our greatest threat is from inaction, not necessarily the current economic climate.

## bill mcbride



The COO of California-based chain Club One, who will present at the FLAME Conference in June, talks about the impact of the credit crunch on the US market and offers advice for clubs in light of the current economic climate

### Q How long have you been in the health club industry?

I started full-time in 1986. Prior to this, I worked in health clubs part-time while at university/college. I had a strong interest in sports medicine but, rather than working with athletes, I felt health clubs and helping the general public would offer far more satisfaction.

At Club One, we don't only operate fitness centres but also manage more than 60 fitness and wellness programmes for blue chip companies such as Motorola, AOL, Chevron and eBay.

### Q What advice would you give a club manager/owner in this economic climate?

Don't panic. Focus on the fundamentals and optimise your staff and payroll. Review all of your expenses and reduce everything possible – without impacting

on your service. During these times, you must look at your business from a completely different perspective, challenging everything you do and understanding why you do it.

Remember to show your members that you care through extra appreciation initiatives such as fresh fruit days, handing out free water and towels in the CV area, and greeting members when they enter and leave. Focus on the individual: don't treat members like a herd.

### Q What are the current trends in the US market?

As an industry, we have around a 20 per cent (consumer) market share. Most clubs are finding sales more challenging at the moment – attrition spiked in Q4 2008 – but may be stabilising now. Ancillary revenue (spa and personal training) are down. I think sales will be much slower in 2009, but there's a mood of quiet optimism; people need our services more than ever, as stress is high.

### Q How is this recession different from earlier ones?

It's much broader, impacting most countries in the world, and it really is going to change the landscape of consumer spending for a long time. People will still spend, but it will be much more value-orientated.

### Q What have been your best and worst decisions ever?

Moving from Washington DC to California after 11 years was my best decision: putting yourself outside your comfort zone is one of the best growth initiatives you can take. The worst decisions involve hiring. If you don't follow your instincts, you can make bad hiring decisions, hurting the employee, the company and what you deliver to members.



Show members you care: hand out free water and towels in CV areas



edited by caroline wilkinson. email: [carolinewilkinson@leisuremedia.com](mailto:carolinewilkinson@leisuremedia.com)



Curves currently targets women only with its 30-minute circuit-based offering

## curves club chain joins the fia

Curves, the women's-only health club chain, is the latest company to join the FIA. The franchise business has more than four million members and 10,000 clubs in more than 60 countries, including more than 250 in the UK.

Niki Keene, director of international wellness for Curves International, says: "The FIA has the right connections, works closely with health partners and the government, and is instrumental in the Change4Life campaign. All this made us realise that we were missing out on an opportunity to strengthen links with local communities."

"The FIA's Club Finder was another factor. Having every one of our clubs listed will make us more accessible to more women and special population groups who are looking for reputable gyms." Curves currently targets women only. However, in time, Keene says it may seek to partner with mixed sex gyms.

David Stalker, FIA COO, says: "Curves claims that its programming reduces the risk of diseases like diabetes and asthma, as well as reducing prescription dosage levels. It's a model our sector might consider if we're to establish ourselves as a 21st century wellbeing service partner."

## fit for the future launches

Fit for the Future, a 12-month behavioural modification programme, is launching this month. Targeting 5,000 16- to 22-year-olds, the social experiment aims to change the activity habits of inactive youths through subsidised gym membership.

The programme will launch in Bristol, Manchester, Newcastle, Suffolk and Torbay. FIA members taking part include Fitness First, LA Fitness, Serco and Sport and Leisure Management (SLM).

Andrée Deane, FIA CEO, says: "If successful, it's good news for the industry, consumers and the guardians of the nation's health, because the government has earmarked over £80m to roll the scheme out nationwide."

## moreactive4life preview at liw

The FIA will preview the results of its MoreActive4Life campaign – the FIA's official sub-brand of the government's Change4Life initiative – at Leisure Industry Week (22–24 September 2009).

MoreActive4Life is a summer consumer campaign developed for both non-members and members of UK health clubs and leisure centres.

The campaign launches in June and will involve the FIA's 2,500 operating members working with the government, national commercial and media partners to provide consumers with access to a wide range of facilities and activities. Visitors to LIW will be given an outline of what impact this industry-wide initiative had on consumers.

  
**HUR**<sup>®</sup>  
AIR RESISTANCE  
FITNESS EQUIPMENT  
*naturally different*



*because  
everybody  
is not the  
same*

[www.huruk.co.uk](http://www.huruk.co.uk)  
Tel: 01206 798864



# behind the scenes of the alliance

Steven Ward, the FIA's public affairs and policy manager, reports on the events behind the formation of the Physical Activity Alliance



When the former Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport James Purnell said, in November 2008, that the purpose of Sport England was to deliver sport in England and that the clue was in the name, it became clear that the promotion of physical activity was off the agency's agenda.

A problem for the FIA, and scores of other organisations, was that leading the agenda was not a priority for anyone else either. The Department of Health (DH) launched a cross-government obesity strategy – called Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives – in January 2008, with an emphasis on the importance of physical activity. However, where clarity

was needed on the leadership of this agenda, there was only a fog of cross-governmental war. The DH had clearly been unprepared for Purnell's policy bomb and the crater it left behind.

## setting the challenge

Stephen Studd, CEO of SkillsActive, had a vision of something called 'Active England' – a body to sit alongside Sport England and to promote and facilitate physical activity. So sure was he of this one day coming to pass, he registered the domain name back in 2004. However, while the concept of an active England clearly resonated within the DH, little detail had evolved behind this thinking.

The FIA consulted Sue Sutton at ISPAL, who had been converging on a similar idea for the sector to take the lead on. She had recently met with Stuart Wood, an Oxford academic who had served Gordon Brown as an economic advisor. Wood had told her that the problem with physical activity was too many empire-building organisations with little interest in co-operating for a greater good. So together, the FIA, SkillsActive and ISPAL acted.

On 3 April 2008, the FIA chair Fred Turok presided over a meeting including a wide range of interested bodies including the Amateur Swimming Association, BISL, British Cycling, the British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health, CCPR, ISRM, Girl Guiding UK and the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation.

Richard Caborn, the former Sports Minister, attended the meeting and said a silo mentality was entrenched across Whitehall, evidenced by the fact that the DCMS was not a signatory to the Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives report.

Caborn laid down a challenge to bring together organisations that had a direct interest in, and that could deliver, a fitter nation. He said that leadership on this issue was important and that it should now come from the public and private sector working together on an agreed agenda. The challenge was profound: no major nation had achieved a 1 per cent annual increase in the number of people engaged in physical activity. Caborn challenged the sector to take the lead and set this goal.

## gathering momentum

With an incredible amount of goodwill from all involved, a period of frenetic activity began. The group of stakeholders involved was expanded to include the Ramblers' Association, the Cyclist's Touring Club, the Amateur Rowing Association and the YMCA movement. Other organisations joining the Physical Activity Alliance included the Exercise Movement and Dance Partnership, the Inclusive Fitness Initiative, Sporting Equals and the National Coalition for Active Ageing – a partnership that includes Help the Aged and Age Concern.

Led by Chris Holmes, the former lead in the DH's social marketing department, we explored the principles that would link us all together. We addressed the ideas of 'cradle to grave' programmes and initiatives to recruit and retain people into active lifestyles,



**Positive step** The Alliance includes the Ramblers' Association and Walk England





**An active nation** The Physical Activity Alliance will work on 'cradle-to-grave' initiatives to encourage mass participation

as well as the idea of collaboration and a single voice for the sector. We also looked at identifying best practice and developing it into a scalable model, as well as promoting activities that were audience-led and that focused on fun, sociability and accessibility – not explicitly on competition or health.

### outdoor emphasis

By 27 June 2008, we were ready to take this concept forward. The DH had indicated support, but felt the Alliance did not sufficiently represent outdoor activity.

Dr William Bird, a practising GP who was a pioneer of exercise referral systems and the Walking Your Way to Health scheme, was leading a group of outdoor organisations called the Outdoor Health Forum. With the backing of leading organisations like Walk England, Natural England and Sustrans, he had been working on an almost identical concept of bringing together physical activity.

The two camps merged and returned to the DH on 13 August 2008 with a unified position which now had support from local government. The result was support and intent from the DH to work directly with the Alliance to deliver its physical activity strategy, in partnership with local bodies such as PCTs, local authorities, County Sport Partnerships and the Regional Department of Health's physical activity co-ordinators.

Then everything stood still until February 2009, when the publication of the DH's Physical Activity Strategy publicly announced the Alliance and enabled us to begin the next phase.

The Alliance will now widely consult the sector on what key roles it should play. An Interim Steering Group – chaired by Dr Bird and comprising the FIA as well as representatives of the outdoors and active travel sectors, the Local Government Association, the Faculty of Public Health, the National Heart Forum and local and regional networks – has been established

to oversee this work and deliver it to an agreed timescale with the DH.

The FIA's vision for the Alliance is for it to create local partnerships that help both the private and public sector to become fully entrenched in the health delivery system. Other organisations will have their own goals. The fact is that together we can proactively shape what is really needed, rather than rely on government.

Alongside the management of the consultation, we have already been given the task of devising the detail behind the dancing theme announced in the DH Physical Activity Plan, so it looks like we will have an interesting time ahead of us.

In the long term, it is down to our members to give feedback on their aims and objectives so that we can continue to shape the sector's future agenda.

Read the May issue of *HCM* for an update on the progress of the consultation, as well as an insight into how the Alliance is shaping up.

**leisureopportunities** is the official recruitment magazine of the fia



## in brief...

### new logo for new-look reps

REPs is due to unveil a fresh new logo to bring the image in line with the more modern feel of the organisation, which has recently rolled out new occupational standards and a revamped website, as well as appointing a new registrar.

Chair John Greenway MP says: "Our brief was to keep the logo recognisable but to give it a modern twist, and we feel that has been successfully achieved. I hope our members will be as pleased with it as we are." The re-designed logo retains the Register's three figures and colours.

The organisation has also taken the opportunity to re-design its CPD logos, as well as those used to denote training courses approved by parent organisation SkillsActive.

### royal sun takes on reps

Insurer Royal Sun Alliance has taken over all of Insuresport Mutual's business, including policies held by REPs members.

Register manager Alison Frater says: "As far as our members go, there has been no change to their policies or the comprehensive nature of their cover.

"We take matters of insurance as seriously as our members do, and are delighted that we are still able to offer them what we feel is a very competitive package."

### journal publisher sought

Four companies have submitted tenders to publish and print the REPs Journal.

For the past four years Multitrax, whose contract with REPs ended at the beginning of 2009, has produced the journal. Registrar Jean-Ann Marnoch says: "We've seen the REPs Journal go from strength to strength since it was launched and are sure that its future will be just as exciting."

A shortlist of tenders is now being drawn up and a final decision will be made by the end of April.

## work-in-progress: new entry structure

SkillsActive has begun to establish a new REPs entry structure following a 12-month consultation on the skills of its fitness industry members.

SkillsActive is currently creating a set of National Occupational Standards which describe the knowledge, competencies and skills needed in each job role within the fitness industry. The aim is to have most of these new standards in place by May 2009.

Once complete, awarding bodies will create syllabuses to meet these standards, and training providers will develop appropriate courses and materials.

Various consultations have taken place over the year with REPs members and carefully selected organisations such as governing bodies, training providers and awarding bodies. The results were then given to SkillsActive's Technical Expert Group (TEG) to review and agree on the new standards.

The final sign-off for the new standards will be made by the Skills Active Fitness Employers (SAFE) group.

REPs registrar Jean-Ann Marnoch says: "The new entry structure has involved listening to and debating the views of all parties involved, and more

discussion will take place as we move to the detailed work. We don't expect to please everyone, but the outcome will be far more tailored to the industry than ever before. The structure will also improve clarity for allied industries like the medical profession, as well as members of the public."

Skills Active will oversee the new standards on behalf of OFQUAL (previously known as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority). OFQUAL regulates the UK's education system and awarding bodies, approving qualifications for entry onto the government's National Qualifications Framework (NQF), which is due to become the Qualifications and Credit Framework.

OFQUAL also audits awarding bodies to ensure that they have the systems, procedures and expertise to guarantee parity and consistency across training providers delivering national qualifications. However, as OFQUAL has no specific sector expertise or knowledge, Skills Active – one of the 25 Sector Skills Councils – ensures that qualifications on the NQF meet the skills needs for its industry, in this case the sport and active leisure industry.



The new standards will set out the skills needed for each job in the industry

visit the reps online: [www.exerciseregister.org](http://www.exerciseregister.org)

**leisureopportunities**

is the official recruitment service of reps



## TRANSPONDER LOCK OTS

THE SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR  
YOUR CLOAKROOM LOCKERS

LOCKS. UNLOCKS  
INSIDE. OUTSIDE  
IS IT BECAUSE OF ITS STYLISH  
SIMPLICITY OR PERHAPS  
BECAUSE ITS STAND ALONE  
OPERATION IS MAINTENANCE  
FREE?

IS IT INTUITIVE ONE STEP  
OPERATION, OR SIMPLICITY OF  
INTEGRATION WITH ACCESS  
CONTROL, MEMBERSHIP &  
E-PURSE SYSTEMS ?

IS IT BECAUSE IT IS  
COMPLETELY COMPATIBLE  
WITH THE TECHNOGYM  
WELLNESS KEY?

IS IT THE ADDITIONAL  
SECURITY AND PEACE OF MIND  
THE SYSTEM WILL BRING?

At Ojmar we can not tell  
you which of these reasons  
will make you choose this  
exceptional system or which  
reasons convinced sites all  
over Europe to use OTS. What  
we can guarantee is that OTS  
will exceed your expectations  
and be a pleasure for your  
customers to use.

Examples of current OTS users:

SANDON SCHOOL LEISURE UK,  
FISICO SPAIN, BAD GLEICHENBERG  
AUSTRIA, OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOL  
LATVIA, CENTER PRAZACKA PRAGUE  
CZECH REPUBLIC, NOVARTIS BASEL  
SWITZERLAND, ATLANTHAL THALASSO  
BIARRITZ FRANCE.

For further information:

Ojmar, S.A.  
Pol. Ind. de Lerun, s/n  
20870 Elgoibar (Gipuzkoa) - Spain  
T.: + 34 943 748 484 · F.: +34 943 748 490  
info@ojmares · www.ojmares

UK Agency - Stockfit Ltd  
Cockniden farm - Brentwood Road  
Herongate-Brentwood  
ESSEX CM13 3LH  
Phone: 01277 812323  
Fax: 01277 812333  
colin@stockfit.co.uk  
www.stockfit.co.uk







**Wright will tackle the UK first**

## new pineapple european md

US-based Pineapple Fitness, the manufacturer of vibration platforms, has appointed Simon Wright as European managing director to head its new distribution division, Pineapple Europe.

Wright, the former managing director of FitLinxx International – the European subsidiary of FitLinxx – will oversee all of Pineapple's activities outside of the US.

Wright says the initial aim will be to start distributing Pineapple products in the UK before approaching other markets in Europe towards the end of 2009.

Pineapple offers low-frequency vibration training platforms, designed for use in core training, yoga, pilates and other group classes.

## in brief...

### rodney cullum passes away

Fitness pioneer Rodney Cullum has died at the age of 67. Cullum, a former chief executive of Central YMCA, passed away following a brief illness.

Cullum joined Central YMCA in 1973 as physical education director and was part of the team that founded Central YMCA Qualifications, the trust's training arm, in 1997. He also developed the UK's first exercise to music qualification. Robin Gargrave, executive director of YMCA Fitness Industry Training, says Cullum's legacy makes it unthinkable for an employer of today to use unqualified instructors.

## lisa taylor joins mend central

Former DC Leisure group fitness manager Lisa Taylor has become strategic partnership manager at obesity specialist organisation MEND Central.

MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition... Do It) delivers clinically-proven health improvement programmes, supporting families with children aged two to 13 to change their behaviour, improve their diet and increase physical activity. The programmes are administered by local MEND-trained teams and currently operate in more than 350 UK locations.

Taylor's role will focus on strengthening MEND's relationships with leisure providers in the public and private sector, with a view to increasing the number of programmes delivered.

She will also lead the development of a new, modular healthy lifestyle programme suitable for delivery in leisure facilities and workplaces.



**Taylor will focus on leisure facilities**

Taylor's position at DC Leisure has been filled by Sarah Leonie, who has worked for the company for seven years. Leonie was promoted to the post from her fitness manager role at Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre in Worcestershire.

## new ceo for leisure connection

Operator Leisure Connection has appointed Richard Millman as its new CEO after Graham Farrant resigned to join management consultancy PMP.

Millman previously worked for Leisure Connection's parent group Danoptra as group strategy director, so he will bring to the role a wealth of experience in marketing, growing a brand, retail and management.

Millman believes it's an exciting time to join the company: "Sport and physical activity have never been

higher up the government agenda and it's great to see Leisure Connection working so proactively with government departments and key organisations to get more people moving."

Farrant has left Leisure Connection after four years to manage the day-to-day operations of PMP as the firm's first CEO. Millman will be taking over his role with immediate effect and will be overseeing the operations of Leisure Connection's 70-plus centres and three Sport England National Sports Centres.

### jones joins zigzag's team

Daniel Jones, formerly of Precor, has joined ZigZag, part of the PTE group, as senior sales consultant.

Jones will be responsible for promoting the ZigZag brand and building awareness around the firm's interactive product range of children's fitness equipment. He will also focus on developing relationships and managing partnerships with operators in the south of England.

Jones previously worked for Holmes Place and Complete Fitness before moving on to his role as Precor's senior sales consultant.

### life fitness' new sales team

Life Fitness has appointed two new members to its UK sales division.

Murray Rudkin, former UK sales manager, has been promoted to UK sales director as part of a strategic move to unify the key account and core sales teams. The move to combine the two teams is intended to allow the firm to better serve customer needs, and Rudkin will be responsible for heading up the overall operation.

Working under Rudkin, Richard Burden has moved up to UK key account manager.



## PEOPLE PROFILE



## jez kearney

The managing director of 24-hour Hoofers Health Club, in Nottingham, talks about winning Heart 106's Club of the Year award, beating Virgin Active and David Lloyd Leisure

## What's your club's history?

I opened Hoofers in 1983, originally as a dance rehearsal space for Central television studios when they moved from London to Nottingham. I'd been working for the studios – as a dancer on shows such as *Live at the Palladium*, *3-2-1* and the *Royal Variety Performances* – but found, when it moved to the East Midlands, there was no provision for rehearsal space.

The transition into a health club has been slow. I invited a friend to use one of my studios for his independent gym, then I took it over, and since then we've grown.

## What facilities does it offer?

Hoofers is a 2,043sq m (21,990sq ft) club with more than 200 pieces of Panatta CV and Air Machine resistance equipment and a large free weights area.

We recently introduced a boxing room, which features 15 mixed-weight punch bags, kick bags and speed balls. Our facilities also include an indoor cycling studio, an 18m swimming pool, a dedicated ladies area, a spa and a sauna. We also maintain our reputation for dance, offering jazz, salsa, street dance and belly dancing.

## Why do you think Hoofers won Club of the Year?

Personal service. Although we have 2,500-plus members, some have been with us

for more than 20 years. If a member hasn't been to the club for more than 21 days, and sometimes even just for a week, we will give them a call to get them going again. My phone bill is huge.

If we get no answer then we follow up with an email and, if that fails to get a response, we suspend their payments and membership until they get back in touch. We also have a policy where everyone in the gym has to be spoken to at least eight times on every visit. We care about our members and I think this gives us an edge.

Unlike other gyms such as Virgin Active and DLL, we don't offer cafés, so there's no distraction – members have no choice but to train. We want them to achieve their wellbeing and fitness goals.

We also offer members no-contract, £40-a-month memberships.

## What did the competition involve?

The judging took place over three months with seven mystery shoppers, and they won't reveal their specific findings even now. When I realised we had won I screamed with excitement: it was one of my best moments in business.

## What's your next goal?

2009's challenge was a 100-mile run in the Arctic, which I've just finished, and I plan to do it again in 2011, but 300 miles. I plan to enlist my staff for this challenge too.

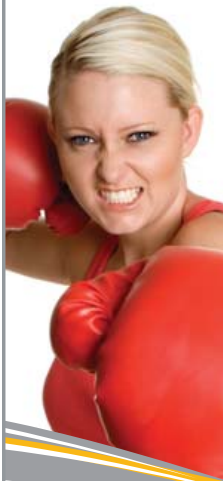


Hoofers first opened in 1983

## liw 2009

IOU (Independent Operators Unite) takes place at LIW 09 – a free two-day seminar offering advice to independents on saving money and boosting their bottom line.

**Show dates** 22–24 September  
**Website** [www.liw.co.uk](http://www.liw.co.uk)

HARDER  
HITTING  
MARKETING

A forward thinking,  
member getting,  
profit increasing,  
smart designing,  
clever thinking,  
web savvy,  
marketing agency...  
**that gets you  
noticed!**

**t: 0870 609 3216**  
enquiries@hattrickmarketing.com  
[www.hattrickmarketing.com](http://www.hattrickmarketing.com)



# competitive edge

**STARTS 28 APRIL 09**

## demelza challenge

On 28 April, the Demelza Hospice Care for Children will launch a 10-week virtual challenge. Teams of four will create animated characters for a virtual race around Australia and New Zealand. They will each be given a pedometer to record daily activities like walking, while 40 other activities can also earn points. The more points gained, the quicker the 16-stage race is completed. Teams can track their progress online. Entry is £25 + VAT per person, with no set sponsorship. Details: [www.demelzachallenge.co.uk](http://www.demelzachallenge.co.uk)



PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM

Take part in a virtual race around Australia and New Zealand



Zip slide across the River Clyde

**17 MAY 2009**

## clyde zip slide

Could you fly 640ft across the River Clyde? Deafblind charity Sense Scotland is looking for 90 brave individuals to jump from a platform 140ft in the air and slide on a zipwire right over the river. The Across the Clyde challenge will raise vital funds to support deafblind and disabled children and adults in Scotland. The minimum sponsorship is £120, and the required sponsorship target is set at £120. The event is also open to teams. Details: +44 (0)141 429 0294

**23 SEPT-8 OCT 09**

## madagascar bike ride 2009

This amazing 500km bike ride takes place on Madagascar, an island off the south-eastern coast of Africa, and raises money for leprosy patients. The route starts high in the island's majestic mountains and descends by winding through misty rainforests. Participants will cycle past beautiful waterfalls and lush paddy fields, through villages and dense forests which are home to exotic wildlife. The final stage runs parallel to the Indian Ocean with its white-sand, palm-fringed beaches. Travel and food costs £1,100 + VAT and minimum sponsorship is £1,500. Details: [events@lepra.org.uk](mailto:events@lepra.org.uk)



500km route starts in the mountains

**Highlight: Great Wall of China**



**10-18 OCTOBER 09**

## trek china

There are 35,000 deaf children in the UK and three more are born every day. In order to raise money for these infants, the National Deaf Children's Society has organised Trek China, a 70km walk across this country which is immersed in history, culture, mythology and ancient traditions. The walk ranges from three to seven hours of trekking each day and highlights will include the Great Wall, the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square. Registration costs £250 and the minimum sponsorship is £2,500. Details: [www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)





**AFEEX offers training and management information for the Chinese market**

## APRIL

### 23 | Understanding and Pitching to the Public Sector

**Venue** DeVere Hotel, Cheshunt, UK  
**Summary**

This seminar, organised by Leisure-net Solutions, is aimed at suppliers who want to understand the various sectors and sub-groups of the leisure industry's public sector, to improve sale strategies. Tel +44 (0)1603 814233  
Email info@leisure-net.org

### 23-26 | FIBO 2009

**Venue** Essen, Germany  
**Summary**  
More than 480 companies from over 35 countries will exhibit products, concepts and solutions for the fitness, wellness and leisure industries at this show in Essen, Germany. The show attracts more than 50,000 visitors.  
Tel +49 211 90 191 190  
Web www.fibo.de

## MAY

### 1-3 | AFEEX

**Venue** Beijing, China  
**Summary**  
Training techniques and management information are on offer at this event – the Asian Fitness Education Expo – targeting China's fitness professionals. Tel +86 10 6712 3689  
Web www.afeex.org

### 20-21 | SIBEC UK

**Venue** The Belfry, Warwickshire, UK  
**Summary**  
Brings together suppliers and buyers in the local authority, trust and education markets for networking and meetings. Tel +44 (0)20 8547 9830  
Web www.mcleaneventsinternational.com

### 20-24 | International Festival for Physical Culture and Sports 2009

**Venue** Olimpiyskiy Sport Center, Moscow, Russia  
**Summary**  
Now in its 15th year, this festival will include a business conference for club owners and managers in Russia, a fitness convention, an aqua convention, a trade show and kids' activity classes. Tel +7 495 755 62 64  
Web www.fitness-convention.ru

### 22-24 | Fitness, Aerobics and Management Convention

**Venue** Arnhem, the Netherlands  
**Summary**  
For instructors, personal trainers, therapists, fitness co-ordinators and managers in the Dutch industry. Tel +31 495 533229  
Web www.efaa.nl

### 24-26 | The Hotel Show

**Venue** Dubai, UAE  
**Summary**  
For the first time, this showcase for hotels and resorts will introduce The Resort Experience: an arena dedicated to leisure, spa and relaxation. It will also see the launch of the Middle East Spa Summit for wellness professionals. Tel +971 4 331 9688  
Web www.thehotelshow.com

### 27-30 | Club Industry East

**Venue** Boston, Massachusetts, US  
**Summary**  
For club owners, fitness management executives and personal trainers. Sessions focus on personal training, sales and management, programming, customer service, medical fitness and wellness. Tel +1 203 358 9900  
Web http://east.clubindustryshow.com

"In Wattbike we have the perfect partner"



**THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE. SO WE DID IT.**



Wattbike is the first exercise bike to be endorsed by British Cycling because it gives accurate and comparable measurements of power output in watts, can be used by anyone and feels as realistic as indoor cycling gets. And it's affordable too.

Wattbike, the result of seven years work and a brief British Cycling said would be impossible, is already helping them take cycling to the next level.

**wattbike**

www.wattbike.com  
08448 759 547

**WHERE WILL WATTBIKE TAKE YOU?**



everyone's talking about . . .

# change4life

The latest government public health initiative gives the health and fitness industry national media exposure like never before. How can operators ensure they take full advantage of this opportunity?

**J**anuary saw the launch of the Change4Life public health campaign. Backed by £275m funding and stretching over three years, its aim is to get more people eating healthily and moving more.

This initiative presents the fitness industry with the chance to forge relationships with health and education professionals, voluntary organisations and community groups, as well as leading charities such as Cancer Research, Diabetes UK and the British Heart Foundation, which are all involved in the campaign.

Funding from major food companies such as Kellogg's, Pepsico, ASDA and

Tesco also means that, for the first time, clubs and centres can approach such corporate giants at a local level on an equal footing. But what's the best way for operators to go about this? How can they take advantage of this unprecedented situation?

The opportunities don't end there. At the end of June, the FIA will be unveiling MoreActive4Life, its own Change4Life sub-brand. This six-week campaign will see FIA member clubs enticing people through their doors by giving out free day passes, staging walkathons to get their services into the public eye, and offering reduced memberships (to be set by each club).

Supported by national media exposure and advertising, MoreActive4Life will initially focus on children's health, but is also intended to encourage new users – and hopefully special populations – into the gym. Is there anything that fitness staff should be doing to skill up and better prepare for this potential influx of special population members?

Similarly, what more could operators be doing to go above the minimum guidelines set out by the FIA? After all, the government will be looking for proof of success; this is the fitness industry's chance to prove that the nation's money has been well spent.

HOW CAN THE INDUSTRY MAKE THE MOST OF CHANGE4LIFE? EMAIL US: [HEALTHCLUB@LEISUREMEDIA.COM](mailto:HEALTHCLUB@LEISUREMEDIA.COM)

## will cavendish

director of health and wellbeing • department of health



**"F**rom a standing start just months ago, Change4Life has quickly established its brand and colourful characters in the public mind. Now the campaign is preparing for its next phase – a series of major initiatives involving partners from all sectors.

Among these will be MoreActive4Life, which will provide people with free

access to health clubs and leisure centres and comes at a time when thousands of families around the country, who took part in Change4Life's 'How Are The Kids?' questionnaire, are looking for ways to change their lifestyles for the better.

After completing the questionnaire, participants received a personalised action plan giving them ideas on how to improve their diet and activity levels. Clubs and centres can help turn this advice into reality and, ultimately, help to reverse the rising tide of obesity. The facilities they provide mean that families can obtain plenty of practical information and support on improving their lifestyles, as well as participating in fun activities. And, as key players in their local communities, they are also often ideally placed to point families in the right direction for more support."

## sarah dauncey

medical director • nuffield health



**"C**hange4Life focuses on exercise tied in with health and wellbeing, rather than exercise on its own. This is true to our cause, which is why we employ clinicians, wellbeing advisors, nutritionists, physiologists and physiotherapists in our clubs. Other operators could look into this. We're also hoping to tie up with our hospital network

by developing pre- and post-rehab exercise programmes.

We're already seeing some larger people in our fitness centres – people who wouldn't have come before – and I think there will be a culture change in gyms across the UK.

Staff will need to give more individual attention and focus on motivation and operators should create a dignified environment. Our employees vary in age, so older adults feel more welcome. We're also working on special programmes for older adults and diabetes sufferers.

The challenge will be to ensure that new members are safe to exercise. We carry out our Vi1 health assessments – looking at height, weight, fitness, cholesterol and glucose levels – when people join. This not only helps with risk assessment but enables us to track health and fitness progress."





The FIA is keen to promote co-operation between clubs and local supermarkets, including activities like in-store workouts

## dave stalker

operations director • fitness industry association



“Leading up to June, I’d like to see club operators working closely with Change4Life partners, particularly local supermarkets. We’ve already written introduction letters to store managers, and clubs could offer initiatives such as in-store workouts or car park roadshows, getting supermarket staff on walkathons and offering prizes

for healthy shopping. The sky really is the limit. I’m hoping that this will lead to long-term relationships with major retailers.

There’s also scope to get involved with local community groups such as schools, PCTs and charities, or even the local ramblers or dog walking association. Although we’re a national industry, success is always local.

Then, in the summer, MoreActive4Life will draw in a new audience. I have absolute faith that the industry can deal with first-time users. The challenge lies in going above the FIA guidelines by setting achievable goals, putting on special fitness classes, or organising social events to make new people welcome. If more children are coming in, why not focus on that age group? The trick is for operators to do a few things that work for their particular club and to do them really well.”

## jean-ann marnoch

registrar • register of exercise professionals



“A basic Level 2 gym instructor is more than capable of dealing with the sort of unconditioned people Change4Life may encourage into our clubs. However, far fewer professionals are qualified to deal with special populations and I think this is where operators may struggle.

Ideally all clubs should be able to deal with older adults and exercise referral. I would love to see instructors add more strings to their bow, and what better reason than to make Change4Life and MoreActive4Life successful? But the onus shouldn’t just be on them; employers should also encourage and incentivise staff to get more training.

Relevant qualifications are already available. There are nationally accredited Level 3 qualifications in working with older adults, disabled clients, pre- and post-natal women and exercise referral. At Level 4, areas covered include back pain, stroke, mental health, cardiac rehab, falls prevention, obesity and diabetes. Our new structure, which comes into play in the middle of this year, will also give Level 2 accreditation to ActiveQ and Central YMCA’s qualifications in working with children. We now need to ensure people are taking these qualifications.”



# PRADEEP RAJAN



Kate Cracknell talks to the CEO of GSSG Holdings about its partnership with *énergie*, its recent entry into the UK market and the global expansion plans for its fitness business

**“O**ur vision is to have 100 clubs,” says Pradeep Rajan, CEO of Qatar-based Ghanim Bin Saad Al Saad and Sons Group, speaking of the plans for its global health and fitness operation. “There is no fixed budget for this,” he adds, explaining that finances are available “if the opportunity is there, and if the business is viable”.

You get the impression that, although pragmatic in its feasibility studies and selection of partners, once GSSG has decided to enter a market, it will invest whatever is needed to turn the potential it has identified into full-blown success.

Owned and funded by, and named after, its chair Ghanim Bin Saad Al Saad,

GSSG is a relatively new entrant to the fitness market – rebranded GSSG Holdings in 2007, the group began life in 1995 as the Jersey Group, with a focus on engineering and construction. Rajan, an industrial production engineer by trade, joined in 1997 to oversee the group’s engineering companies. So how did he end up in charge of a health and fitness business?

“We have many different divisions. Our chairman’s main vision was to diversify our business into fast-growth sectors,” Rajan explains – GSSG’s interests now span engineering, technology, telecommunications, manufacturing, construction, aviation, hospitality, real estate, education, and health and fitness. “I’m CEO of the engineering, manufacturing and fitness businesses,” he adds. This puts him in charge of 17 of GSSG’s 31 companies.

“In 2006, we bought a 50 per cent share in General Sports – a company that owned three fitness clubs as well as MTM Active, a division that dealt mainly with fitness equipment – and by October 2008 we had bought the remaining 50 per cent share.

“General Sports had been working with the Sports Academy of Qatar, known as Aspire Qatar, and there were projects worth around £8m–£9m that still needed to be executed as part of that contract. These were engineering-related projects such as construction, consultancy, supply of fitness equipment and so on, so I was asked to handle them. That’s how I got into the fitness industry.

“I was also told to take control of the health clubs, as the group operations manager had left. I couldn’t immediately find anyone to run them for us, so I had to take them on myself. I started studying the fitness business, going through all the processes and attending conferences.”

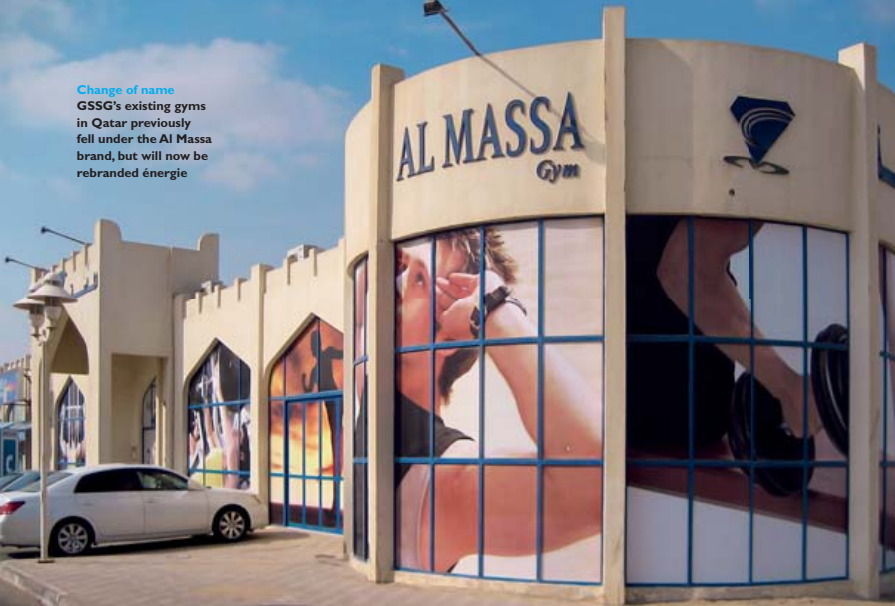
**UK export** The *énergie* model will need to be adapted for the Middle East, where mixed-sex clubs are not an option

**“OUR VISION IS FOR 100 CLUBS. IF THERE’S A FEASIBLE OPPORTUNITY, WE WILL LOOK AT IT – THERE IS NO FIXED BUDGET”**





**Change of name**  
GSSG's existing gyms in Qatar previously fell under the Al Massa brand, but will now be rebranded énergie



## local opportunities

Rajan continues: "The market potential in the Middle East is huge, with little competition – there's really just Gold's Gym, which has been there for years, and now Fitness First, which is about to open its first club in Qatar and which will be our main competitor.

"But I felt we lagged behind in terms of technology and systems, which is key to managing clubs. I started looking for a fitness company I could bring in from Europe to work with us on this; it was easier to adopt a system that was already proven and tested than to develop a new one and try to learn from our mistakes.

"We also felt it was important for us to bring in a brand from Europe," he adds – a way of boosting consumer confidence in the offering by bringing in an established Western name. "We had a short list of four companies we were considering partnering with, and in the end the best response we had was from énergie. GSSG has therefore acquired a master licence for énergie in the Middle East, while MTM is operating as a separate division dealing in sports and medical equipment."

So what are GSSG's plans for expansion? "We already have four clubs in Qatar, targeting the upper-middle class, and we'll have eight by the end of 2009," says Rajan. "Within two to three

years, we aim to have at least 30–40 clubs across the region – all new builds."

The existing four sites will be rebranded énergie. All new clubs going forward will also be énergie-branded – the deal has given GSSG the local rights to six brands: énergie Fitness Clubs, énergie Fitness for Women, budget concept Fitness, énergie Personal Fitness, énergie Physio and énergie Day Spa.

Now armed with the European brand, marketing and operational systems it required, GSSG will – with énergie's support – continue to manage its own clubs in the Middle East. "Qatar, Bahrain and Egypt are the three places we have targeted for the initial stage – all markets where we already have offices, and where we own property we can develop," Rajan continues. "We won't target UAE for now, because the economic conditions there are not that good at the moment."

Of initial interest, given the three priority markets, are the énergie Fitness Clubs and énergie Fitness for Women brands. "We plan to open a big women-only club in Cairo, Egypt," says Rajan. However, the business models will need to be adapted slightly to cater for Middle Eastern culture: "We don't have mixed clubs, for example. We need separate clubs for men and women, or at least different areas within a club. Where there are mixed sites, we only allow



**Local offering** GSSG already operates four high-end clubs in Qatar; by the end of 2009, this will have risen to eight

access for families – bachelors are not permitted. There are a lot of restrictions in this part of the world.

"The marketing is also different from the UK and Europe because of cultural differences, for example, and a lower understanding of the benefits of fitness.

"It might take some time to adjust the model for the Arab culture, but we've been running these clubs for two-and-a-half years now, so we understand what members need. I think we can transfer that knowledge to énergie, and we can work together to make sure the offering is right for the markets of the Middle East." ►





## ► entering the uk

But GSSG's fitness ambitions extend beyond the Middle East; indeed, the group recently acquired eight Fitness First clubs in the UK. "Fitness First in Dubai was keen to buy our clubs, but I said: 'No, I'm not interested in selling, but I'll buy your clubs!' That didn't happen, but Jan [Spatichia, CEO of The énergie Group] mentioned that, if I was interested in buying Fitness First clubs, there were some in the UK which we could buy."

That deal went through in February, brokered by énergie, which now runs the clubs on behalf of GSSG. "We have a partnership with énergie whereby we invest, but the complete UK business is managed by them under a franchise licence and management contract," says Rajan – The énergie Group has set up a new Management Services division to be able to do this (see HCM March 09, p22).

In fact, when it acquired the eight Fitness First clubs, GSSG bought a package of 10 énergie licences; it is therefore committed to opening a further two clubs in the UK within the first 12 months of the partnership.

GSSG's interest in acquiring UK clubs is twofold: firstly, as an investment; and secondly, to add weight to the group's fitness credentials. "If we can say that we have eight health clubs in the UK, as well as four clubs right now in Qatar,

**Fitness First deal** énergie invested in one of the eight sites, at Milton Keynes, which it will use as a training centre

it becomes easier for us to market ourselves even in the Middle East," explains Rajan.

"The prevailing economic conditions are not very attractive right now but, if these initial clubs are successful within two to three years, we're interested in increasing our portfolio in the UK."

That will be through further acquisition, Rajan confirms, which prompts the question: are there not good deals to be had at the moment, given the various fitness chains up for sale? Acknowledging that a two- to three-year trial period has been specified, might GSSG consider further purchases before then if the deal were right?

"There are one or two we're considering, yes, and looking at feasibility. It's too early to disclose those names, but we're interested in buying because we're looking for freehold properties."

## global expansion

"We're negotiating with énergie to go ahead for the rest of the world as well, provided we have a successful model in the UK and the Middle East within the first two years. We're looking at India, for example, which is a huge market – Fitness First has big plans to expand there.

"We're planning a three-way partnership in India, with GSSG and énergie investing as well as me investing personally. I'd like to open the first Indian club in my home city of Bangalore, and we're already looking for good properties. Property prices are going down, so this will be the time to invest, and then I think we should be able to launch within a year or two.

"India as a market is open to different levels of offering, unlike the Middle East. The Fitness budget offering would do well there, for example. As that involves smaller sites needing less investment, we could open hundreds of clubs.

"We're not actively looking at any other markets at the moment, although my chairman is also the chair of Barwa Real Estate, which has an international arm with investments in the UK, the UAE, France, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and so on. We don't have any concrete plans, but if we get an opening in those places through Barwa then yes, we're interested, and we will work directly with énergie on any opportunities in the same way that we're working together in the UK."

Although the current economic uncertainty means Rajan is cautious about predicting exactly when his 100-club goal will be achieved, he is clear that the fitness business will continue to grow in importance within the GSSG Holdings portfolio: "In the list of companies that I manage, the fitness business ranks 10th right now in terms of revenue. There is a lot of work to do, and more clubs to open, but I would like to bring it into the top five."



**kate cracknell**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

**"IF OUR EIGHT NEW CLUBS ARE A SUCCESS, WE WILL BE INTERESTED IN FURTHER ACQUISITIONS TO GROW OUR UK PORTFOLIO"**









# it's a KNOCKOUT

Vicky Kiernander reports on the growing popularity of boxing in health and fitness clubs

## A

lmost two years ago (*HCM* July 07), we looked at how boxing was starting to make an appearance in health and fitness

clubs. Today, the demand for boxing-inspired classes and activities shows no sign of abating; indeed, the FIA is currently in discussions with the Amateur Boxing Association of England, with a view to enhancing the boxing-related elements of its **go** programme.

### all-round performer

Boxing is credited as one of the fastest routes to all-round fitness, helping to define the arms and legs, strengthen the core muscles and develop cardiovascular capacity. Advocates say it also relieves stress, speeds up reactions and improves mental agility.

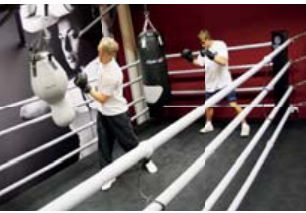
More than this, boxing training is fun to do and entertaining to watch. Something about the activity, whether it's the dodging and ducking or the hooking and jabbing, just makes people's heads turn. As Martin McKenzie, MD of training provider Fight Fit, puts it: "Boxing is an exciting and cool way of getting fit. Put a trainer who knows how to hold the pads with a client in the middle of the gym floor and members stop exercising and start watching."

The theatre of the activity and its impact on members has not been lost on operators: many ensure their boxing

areas can be viewed by clients working out elsewhere in the gym, rather than being tucked away out of sight.

This is what LA Fitness did when it installed its first boxing area as part of a refurbishment of its Piccadilly club in December 2008. The space, which occupies a former studio, is visible to members using the gym over a small wall that acts as a balcony. Meanwhile, Leisure Connection has gone for full impact at Dorking and Wyboston Leisure Centres, both of which recently acquired boxing rings following refurbishments. "As soon as you walk into these Harpers gyms, your eyes are drawn to the boxing rings. They really have the 'wow' factor," says David Coulthard, Leisure Connection's regional health and fitness manager.

The secret, says Derek Crawford, UK national fitness manager at Fitness First, is to assimilate the boxing facilities into the general offer. The chain, which launched its first boxing area at Fitness First Gorton in Manchester in 2007, has since integrated the concept into its



**Fighting fit** Boxing strengthens core muscles and improves mental agility and cardiovascular performance



## ESCAPE'S TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL BOXING AREA

- 1 Look at your customers and identify what you want to achieve from a boxing area
- 2 Choose a supplier that is proven, reputable and that understands your business
- 3 Invest in good quality training and programming
- 4 Create an experience with the marketing and design of the area
- 5 Make the space inviting, with the right lighting and music



Training a client in the middle of the gym is a great way of getting other members' attention

**Keep it simple** For clubs without space to spare, accessories such as free-standing bags and pads can still be a hit with members

clubs in Acton, Bradford and Dudley, as well as its £2m site in Baker Street. "The boxing area must never dominate the club. We're not trying to create a boxing club. It's about establishing a point of difference," he adds.

### a tailored approach

Escape Fitness, which worked with all of these operators to design and install boxing areas, has seen growing demand for facilities of all sizes over recent years. "Operators don't necessarily have to invest vast sums of money to offer boxing training, but they do have to look at the profile of their members and ask themselves what they want to achieve by introducing a boxing area. How do they want to use the space – is it for personal training or classes? The answers to these questions will inform the size and scope of the boxing space they require," says Jeremy Navrady, Escape's sales and marketing manager.

A dedicated space with a full-size ring, punch bags and other accessories will cost up to £20,000, but a boxing area with flooring, bags, skipping ropes and gloves can be created for as little as £2,000, Navrady adds.

Operators also have to consider how much space they can allocate to a boxing facility. Escape recently worked with the SnowDome at Tamworth

to add a new dimension to its fitness provision. The result is Fitbox, a £250,000 boxing-themed facility housed in a former sports hall. The area consists of a full-size boxing ring with punch bags at each corner, surrounded by approximately 70 standalone exercise stations including free weights, Reebok punch bags, power bags, skipping ropes and medicine balls.

For those who can't dedicate this amount of space, an area measuring around 4mx4m will suffice, says Navrady: "This is enough for technique bags, hook and jab bags, and to allow the client and trainer to work around the equipment."

For those who really don't have any space to spare, accessories such as free-standing bags, pads, gloves and skipping ropes can be easily incorporated onto

the gym floor for personal training or for use by the members themselves.

There's another factor that influences Fitness First's decision to install a boxing facility, and that's staff commitment, as Crawford explains: "The concept only works when a member of the team has either got a background in boxing or is hugely passionate about it. They have to lead it." This is exactly what has happened at the Gorton club where Sean Krool, who has a history of training heavyweight boxers, has taken responsibility for boxing at the club, which now runs more than 20 boxing-inspired classes each week.

### staff training

Operators and suppliers agree that staff training in safe boxing skills is essential. ▶

## TRAINING PROVIDERS – FIGHT FIT

**Fight Fit's two-day boxing instruction course costs £179 and covers:**

- Boxing skills and techniques from stance, footwork, punches and five-punch combinations to holding pads and effective skipping techniques
- How to motivate and inspire clients with words and boxing skills



**Inspirational Fight Fit's training includes skills to motivate clients**



► Fight Fit's McKenzie says trainers need to understand the difference between sport-specific boxing and boxing for fitness: "The skills learned in boxing as a sport are geared towards a boxer being able to give and receive punches, but boxing for fitness is about learning the skills of boxing – the various punches, the stance and hand-eye co-ordination."

Fight Fit has been delivering boxing programmes to both the industry and the public since 2005, but has seen demand drastically increase since 2007, prompting the launch of its two-day

boxing instruction course at LIW last year. "We had 302 sign-ups to the course at LIW alone and the majority of these were from individuals. Since then, we've had a lot of referrals to the large chains to train staff and to design specific programmes for their clubs," McKenzie comments.

Optimal Life Fitness, which is currently in talks with a major UK fitness chain about boxing training, has also seen strong demand for its Performance Boxing course, which launched this January. MD Tommy Matthews says:

"We've held three courses since January and all have been over-subscribed, which is a clear indication of the popularity of the activity."

As demand for boxing-inspired training increases, so do the number of courses – but they all have to meet stringent standards if they want to be endorsed by SkillsActive, as Tom Bell, development officer for fitness, explains: "SkillsActive works directly with training providers in the fitness industry to recognise quality courses that teach boxing techniques such as stance, footwork and pad work. These courses are fitness-orientated, giving participants a great cardiovascular workout. Our endorsement process ensures they are safe and effective, and that correct terminology is used to distinguish these courses from the sport of boxing itself."

For this reason, only seven courses – including the aforementioned Fight Fit and Optimal Life Fitness courses – have so far been endorsed by SkillsActive.

"Boxing training is one of the areas in the fitness industry that could do with improvement," says Matthews. "The skills and techniques are not always performed well and I've come across instructors who teach without being trained themselves."

McKenzie agrees: "Whether you are a world championship boxer or a new instructor, teaching boxing for fitness safely and correctly is something that needs to be delivered by certified professionals who understand both fitness and boxing."

### make the most of it

Good marketing and induction sessions are imperative to ensure operators make the most of their boxing areas, says Isabelle Chadbourne, marketing manager at the SnowDome at Tamworth. "Fitbox has been deliberately aimed at men and women, but we have made a more concerted effort to appeal to women." This is evident in the 12m-wide graphics surrounding the area, featuring a woman with pink boxing gloves. "We felt that, if women were at ease there, men would like it too."

All members are encouraged to take the hour-long induction at Fitbox with a personal trainer. They are shown how to use all the floor equipment in the area before going into the ring to work on the punch bags and pads. Each member is also given a free pair of boxing gloves.

The facility is open to members every day for circuit training, bag work, weight training and core stability work.



Outbox has been developed by boxer David Haye (this photo) and his trainer Adam Booth

### TRAINING PROVIDER – OUTBOX

Outbox has been working in partnership with FitPro since July 2008. Developed by boxer David Haye and his trainer Adam Booth, Outbox is accredited by the British Boxing Board of Control. Training costs £99.

- Level One, delivered online via PTontheNet.com, teaches footwork, basic punches and combinations, and safe technique
- Levels Two and Three, which will be available in September and November 2009 respectively, will feature advanced choreography using defence, more footwork, rhythms and head movements



### 3 Peaks Challenge

25-26 July 2009

### 24 Peaks Challenge

15-16 August 2009



Learn correct techniques for using coaching mitts and pads

#### TRAINING PROVIDERS – OPTIMAL LIFE FITNESS

##### Optimal's one-day Performance Boxing course costs £176.25 and teaches instructors to:

- Safely design and implement boxing into group fitness or personal training
- Display and teach the correct techniques for punching and holding focus pads and coaching mitts
- Communicate positively with class participants and individual clients to develop rewarding relationships
- Successfully structure and create varied group training and personal training sessions that keep clients motivated and coming back

The company also introduces its Advanced Performance Boxing course this month, which enables trainers to:

- Deliver advanced punching and padding techniques
- Introduce defensive skills such as slipping, ducking, rolling and blocking
- Deliver the above in a manner that's both safe and effective for the trainer and their clients
- Design their own boxing-style workouts that will keep their clients challenged and making progress
- Keep their sessions exciting, fun and results-based

## Boxing-inspired training has to meet stringent standards to be endorsed by SkillsActive

In addition, instructors host Boxercise classes – usually with a 50:50 male to female ratio – complete with thumping music and disco lights. "Fitbox has been well received by existing members and I believe it has played a part in the decision-making process of new members looking to join," says Chadbourne.

Meanwhile, LA Fitness Piccadilly believes its boxing area – a half-sized ring, two punch bags and a three-in-one boxing station comprising a punch bag, speed ball and combination bag – is making group fitness popular with men.

The new boxing rings at Wyboston and Dorking Leisure Centres, installed after club refurbishments of £487,000 and £290,000 respectively, also host group classes, personal training sessions, circuit training and technique classes.

"The uptake at these clubs has been extraordinary and we have more and more people participating in boxing activities each week.

"The colours, graphics and equipment all combine so that the facility markets itself – it's a unique selling point and has definitely helped to sell memberships," observes Coulthard.

The boxing bug, it seems, has yet to release its hold on the health and fitness industry, but installing equipment alone will not guarantee success. Staff training and commitment, plus a varied timetable of activities to excite and motivate members, are also needed to ensure the facility becomes a knockout.



**vicky kiernander**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com



## Swap your laptops for the hill tops

Climb the 3 highest mountains in the UK in our infamous 3 Peaks Challenge or take on 24 mountains in the stunning Lake District – the choice is yours.

To find out more call Natalie or Lucy on **0844 412 2877** or email **challenges@redcross.org.uk**



The British Red Cross Society, incorporated by Royal Charter 1908, is a charity registered in England and Wales (220349) and Scotland (SC207728).

Photo: David Pegg

[redcross.org.uk/events](http://redcross.org.uk/events)

Everyone welcome



# TAKING IT PERSONALLY

Neena Dhillon reports on the growth in personal training, both in bespoke studios and in clubs where PT is a prime focus

**P**ersonal training continues to play an important role in the UK's health and fitness industry, with a proliferation of dedicated studio openings in the past 18 months pointing to its popularity. Hand in hand with this comes a rise in the number of mainstream fitness operators seeking to develop personal training into a core revenue generator. But what are the factors behind this apparent increase in demand for one-on-one services and how can providers stay busy in a tough economy?

Renowned personal trainer Matt Roberts, who established his own training academy in April 2008 to deliver nationally recognised qualifications, believes that demand is down to public awareness. "More people are concerned about their health and want to take care of themselves," he comments. "Gym memberships don't help them get results, whereas personal trainers are accountable to their clients in terms of the service they provide. People want their training time to be more effective, and a few personal sessions can help them learn how to exercise properly."

Others in the industry see the trend as a natural progression in a maturing fitness market – and one that follows in the footsteps of the US. Matt Kendrick, who has recently expanded his personal training facility in Solihull, has first-hand experience. "I travelled to the US some years ago and noticed that private personal training studios were a much bigger thing out there," he says. "The business over here has grown in the past five years." Picking up on a similar theme, Jeremy Navrady, sales and marketing manager at Escape Fitness, says: "As the market matures, a knowledgeable and discerning consumer is looking for something else. They are putting a value on good health, adopting a holistic approach."

## LONDON WEIGHTING

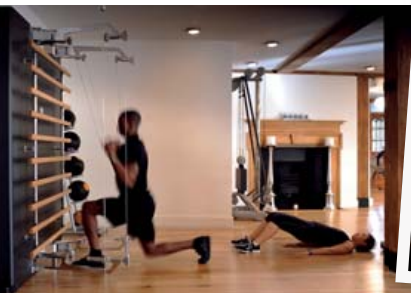
Located in London's Covent Garden, I.N.C Space, a private members' club dedicated to performing artists, opens this month with its own wellness centre. Personal training services are a significant component and the club's business model encourages all members to participate in personal training. Members are able to book personal coaching that incorporates lifestyle and health assessments, and there will also be intensive courses of up to six days a week for clients training for a part in a film or photo shoot. Members also enjoy a reduced annual membership, which ranges from £1,000 to £1,440, when they sign up for 12 personal training sessions.

"Our trainers specialise in fields such as nutrition, corrective exercise and body-shape sculpting, so we can cross-refer across our team to ensure the correct mode of training," says wellness director Paul Sansome. "We're demonstrating a transition into lifestyle coaching that uses personality and behaviour patterns, social support structures, nutritional analysis and muscular balance assessment, coupled with functional movement patterns, to determine training progression."

Also London-based, the first Énergie Personal Fitness studio franchise opened in December 2008 in St Johns Wood. Established by Imran Ilahi, the 650sq m (7,000sq ft) site incorporates two personal training delivery areas, a Power Plate studio and an area for complementary therapies. Two full-time trainers are employed to handle Ilahi's clients, while four freelance trainers rent space within the studio. Énergie director Jason Gardner thinks the company's franchise model provides much-needed business support to personal trainers. "Although demand has been on the up, so too has the number of personal trainers dropping out of the industry because of lack of

opportunity," he says. "We have a complete solution that allows personal trainers to run their own business, including a marketing toolkit, results-guaranteed programmes, client generation and management software, and the ability to build a business under a recognised brand name."

Personal trainers have a choice of franchise models, from home- and club-based businesses to the full studio franchise. Franchisees are required to make a minimum investment of £850 to £18,000, depending on the model, and are then assisted in preparing a business plan on their chosen area through intelligent profiling of the local demographics.



**Results-driven** Personal trainer Matt Roberts (right) says PT studios often get better results than gyms because they're more accountable for the services they provide





**Marketing** Fitness First Europe (above) is supporting its PTs in the economic downturn by investing in member awareness campaigns

Gardner reports that this first site has quickly established a strong client base. Furthermore, Ilahi has benefited from cash being generated through fees that are paid per session by the other trainers renting space in his facility.

#### CO-OPERATIVE APPROACH

Proving the increasing accessibility of personal training services, low-cost operator The Gym reports that more than 20 per cent of its existing membership base in its Hounslow and Guildford clubs has signed up to one-on-one sessions. Each site benefits from the presence of six to eight personal trainers who are self-employed and who keep 100 per cent of their revenues, but who also work a number of gym floor hours each week.

"With our low-cost model, members are able to fund personal training from the savings they make on comparable



**Popular provision** Supplier Star Trac is witnessing an increase in the number of operators integrating personal training zones into their facilities (above)

membership fees," comments CEO John Treharne. "It's popular because it's good value for money and we will place the same emphasis on it in our new Vauxhall club, which opens in June."

Staying in south London, Evolution Physical Training was established in May 2008 by a collective of personal trainers – including a sports therapist, pilates specialist and strength and



- conditioning trainer – who wanted to offer a multi-disciplined approach. “We felt people were often dissatisfied with their experience of personal training. We wanted to create a complete service where we could help clients achieve a specific goal by identifying any stumbling blocks, such as a core strength deficiency, and addressing them,” says director Kelly Balmer.

Evolution has, to date, managed to avoid the crunch of the recession by rewarding client referral with a free training session, and by running fitness events in the local community. One such example – a six-week outdoor programme available to small groups of mums who work out with their pushchairs, led by a trainer – has proved to be a good feeder into the physical training business. “Mums from these groups regularly take up one-on-one training as a result,” confirms Balmer.

Reflecting on the collective skills theme, Matt Roberts argues that many studios rely on a one-dimensional business model that does not offer enough variety. “As personal training becomes more widespread, trainers can improve their services by developing their knowledge base and improving their experience through a wide array of clients and allied health professionals,” he states. But working as a collective can have other benefits too, as personal trainer and Keiser consultant Winston Squire points out: “I think co-operatives of trainers could be a thing of the future because, unless you have a big marketing budget, it’s extremely challenging to cover the overheads of a studio on your own. Bringing in other trainers means that a client base can be shared and increases the likelihood of running a busy studio, including during off-peak periods.”

## BEYOND THE CAPITAL

Squire questions whether studios have the same likelihood of success outside of London as they do in the capital. “Demand for personal training isn’t as thriving outside London. I think it will grow in time, although on what scale is dependent on the area of the country and the expertise of the trainer,” he adds.

Despite this, there is a steady march of studios opening across the UK. MK Personal Training, based at David Lloyd Solihull, opened a second studio in January – equipped by



**New opening** MK Personal Training, based at DLL Solihull, opened its second site in January, to cater for non-members

Escape – in order to train non-members. Its founder, Matt Kendrick, explains: “Many of the 300 clients that we see each week are members, but we recognised a demand from non-members who want to be looked after privately. We’ve attracted 40 new clients since the beginning of the year and are known for taking care of people from head to toe, dealing with injuries and physical pain in particular.”

Other openings outside the capital in the past six months include Wentworth Personal Training Studio in Surrey and Matt Coulson’s Performance Training Solutions Gym in Huddersfield, both of which are equipped with a Matrix Functional Trainer and CV equipment. According to Matrix managing director Jon Johnston: “The good thing about setting up a personal training studio is that equipment can be minimal. A Functional Trainer, a few additional accessories and some cardio kit is a good foundation; not much else is required if you are a skilled trainer who can improvise.”

## MAINSTREAM UPLIFT

Aside from these dedicated PT studios, public and mainstream operators are also extending their offer and generating extra revenues from existing space by offering additional personal training services. Star Trac, supplier of the Max Rack™, HumanSport™ and DAP (Dual Action Pulley), is currently

## GROUP THERAPY

In its 2008 Personal Training Programs & Equipment Survey, carried out among 926 members, the IDEA Health & Fitness Association reported an upswing in group personal training sessions: “While one-on-one is still the dominant format, two clients sharing a personal training session made a strong showing, with 84 per cent of respondents offering this kind of service. More than 50 per cent felt these types of session would continue to grow.”

UK operators are tapping into this emerging trend. Paul Sansome says I.N.C Space’s wellness centre will have a dedicated area where staff will be able to train up to four clients with

similar goals. “More people will be able to afford personal training as they can share the costs,” he says. Jon Johnston of Matrix Fitness Systems adds: “One trainer looking after two or three people for perhaps only 10 per cent or 20 per cent more than his/her normal fee is a win-win for trainer and clients. It also means that better trainers will prosper, because good skills are required to deliver to a small group.”

Supplier Escape Fitness, meanwhile, has recorded an increase in enquiries about programmes for groups. “It’s all about the application of our equipment, developing programmes for small groups of up to five, for example, who have the same goal,” says sales and marketing manager Jeremy Navrady. “We can provide lots of different ideas

to trainers who may be looking after a group of people working towards an occasion, such as getting fit for a wedding or a marathon.”

While group personal training is not yet as prominent in Europe, Fitness First is expecting the trend to emerge soon and will be ready with appropriate services, such as buddy sessions. In the meantime, it is offering free gym floor member workshops comprising 15- to 30-minute classes that showcase functional training targeting the four popular fitness goals of sport, health, shape and strength. “We want to promote the idea that members can explore these activities further through our personal trainers,” adds Steve Kouma, the company’s European fitness director.





**Signing up** Low-cost operator The Gym says 20 per cent of members at its two sites have opted for one-to-one training

working on a few installations for dedicated studios – where ‘space efficiency’ and flexibility are the main mantras – but it also reports that fitness operators integrating unique personal training zones are notably more prevalent. Star Trac’s education and development manager, Sarah Morelli, elaborates: “Time Fitness in Fife, Scotland, is a 24-hour facility with generally low staffing levels, but it has recently added personal training, which is still fairly new to the area. Another centre that has really capitalised on personal training is GL-14 in Fairfield, Bedfordshire, with its emphasis on functional training zones and accessibility for everyone.”

Over at Fitness First Europe, where the personal training product has been in development for just over two years, the operator has invested recently in a partnership with EREPs (the European Register of Health Professionals) that covers all its personal trainers and fitness staff. It has also been supporting its personal trainers through the economic downturn by investing in member awareness campaigns.

“Our personal trainers offer a wide variety of services to ensure maximum exposure among members,” comments Steve Kouma, Fitness First’s fitness director for Europe. “We have



**Quick start** Matrix says only a minimal amount of kit is needed to set up a PT studio. The company recommends its Functional Trainer

30-minute sessions, buddy sessions, check-up sessions every month, full programmes – and even online mentoring is available.” While active personal training clients account for around 12 per cent of the operator’s membership base, Kouma points out that a member will only be directed to personal training if staff believe their goals are best serviced in this way.

So, the outlook for personal training is one of robust health, despite the economic gloom and doom. “We network with a lot of trainers and have noticed that there’s something different about this recession, because people are not viewing looking after their health and wellbeing as a luxury any more. It’s no longer seen as a discretionary spend,” says Escape’s Navrady. But that doesn’t mean that personal trainers can throw caution to the wind. “Right now it’s going

to be a tough market for any wannabe studio owner; studios will continue to open at a consistent rate, but many who fail to do comprehensive market research could find the challenge too much,” concludes Morelli.



**neena dhillon**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com



To drive PT revenue and deliver faster results for the widest range of customers, we introduce the ultimate gym ‘multi tool’.

Designed to deliver optimum results whether training for general strength gains, sport specific movements and power, or for everyday fitness and core stability. It’s the intelligent answer; outstanding aesthetic and build quality combined with versatility and the lowest cost of ownership.

The Matrix Functional Trainer.  
It’s the shape of things to come.

To discover how Matrix Human Engineering transforms both business and bodies call the sales team on 0800 389 6078 or visit [www.matrixfitness.co.uk](http://www.matrixfitness.co.uk)

**MATRIX**  
human engineering



# LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Caroline Wilkinson visits the DCSF's new fitness facility in Westminster, London, to see if government is following its own healthy living recommendations



**W**ith the government instigating high-profile initiatives such as Change4Life to improve the nation's health (see p26), should we expect it to practise what it preaches? David Bell, the permanent secretary of state for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), believes so.

Providing quality health and wellbeing resources for the 1,800 staff working at the DCSF's headquarters – Sanctuary House in Whitehall, London – is just one way in which the department is encouraging healthy lifestyles. "Seems to me what we do in the civil service – an employer of nearly half a million people – is part of what the government is trying to encourage more generally across the nation," explains Bell.

"Tackling childhood obesity – trying to get young people to exercise more and ensuring the school curriculum provides plenty of chances to be active – is the DCSF's core business. But we don't want people to think we're encouraging young people and not doing anything with our own staff: there's an element of making sure we lead by example."

This is one reason why £95,000 was invested in relocating and revamping the DCSF's gym as part of a more extensive refurbishment of its headquarters. Another major motive was to ensure DCSF had a healthy workforce.

Alan Peed, the director of corporate development for the Civil Service Sports Council, Sport & Leisure (CSSC), which delivers sport and leisure opportunities to government employees, says: "A corporate fitness facility can bring real benefits, including reduced absenteeism, happier staff and increased productivity."

The CSSC's management arm, Alpha Fitness Management Solution – which operates the new gym – worked in partnership with the DCSF to design its new fitness facility, as well as to equip and staff it. So what winning design did they come up with, and what incentives have they put in place to entice civil servants over the threshold?

## easy access

The original plan was to overhaul the existing small fitness suite in the basement of the building. But when Bell, in addition to his role at the DCSF, took over as chair of the CSSC, he insisted on creating a new gym to match the standard of any commercial facility.

One key consideration for the new facility was to ensure that it was easy to get to. In its new, more visible location on the lower ground floor, access will be provided via a spacious atrium with a central staircase leading down to a café and the open-plan fitness centre. This layout has been specifically designed to guide members of staff to the gym.

Called Sanctuary House Fitness Centre (SHFC), the new DCSF gym spans 2,142sq ft (199sq m). The facility not only features 25 stations of Teco CV and resistance equipment – supplied by On Site Fitness – but an 883sq ft (82sq m) aerobics studio too.



PICTURE: WWW.STOCK.COM/ARND BRONKHORST

**Top-up benefits** Members pay an extra £3.15 to the CSSC every month, which funds staff and family discounts on other activities such as fencing

**We don't want anyone to think we're encouraging young people to exercise, but not our own staff**





**Engaging employees** To encourage staff to use the new gym, membership is only £16 a month, with no contract, no admin and no joining fee

There is also a small free weights area, a Body Coach Vibration Training machine and a Back Revolution machine, designed to decompress and elongate the spine to relieve back pain. Finally, Beat Cycling equipment is available for group cycling classes. All the equipment is self-generating, so doesn't need a power supply, making it easier to move the pieces around the gym.

In the next few months, the centre's offerings will expand to include a relaxation lounge, a reception area, a treatment/consultation room and healthy option vending machines.

### corporate needs

Although this gym is larger than an average corporate fitness facility, Peed says the size of a space isn't as important as people might assume: "Some individuals think they need to spend a fortune on delivering a gym that recreates an Esporta club, when corporate gyms don't need to be big.

"Some buildings only have 600 people working in them, and realistically how many will join the gym and how many will be using the facility at any one time? Getting clients to understand this is my biggest challenge. Once people realise they don't need a space the size of the Albert Hall, we can work on meeting their needs. This may only be four or five stations of equipment."

If space and budget allowed, however, Peed would have an exercise studio in every facility. One of his prime



**Grand opening** 300 members have signed up since the launch in December 2008

responsibilities is implementing fitness programmes, and he feels studios target staff who may not be drawn to a gym. At least two classes are held at SHFC every day, including one at lunchtime.

Also key to encouraging people to exercise is getting the right mix of fitness staff. The centre's manager, a former personal trainer of Prime Minister Gordon Brown at the Treasury's gym, is a qualified Level 3 GP referral and nutritional advisor. Alpha also employs two REPs-accredited Level 3 personal trainers to man the centre between 8am and 5pm – the peak times for members needing one-to-one

feedback, and for completing PAR-Qs and doing inductions. The facility, however, is open from 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday.

"We try to educate members about fitness by ensuring they receive regular interaction with instructors and updated programmes," explains Peed. "This is important to maintain their motivation and to ensure they achieve their goals".

Members also receive a training folder with advice on health and fitness including information on blood pressure, the benefits of CV and resistance training, and tips on diet and nutrition as well as stress management. ▶



**Action stations** The new 199sq m facility features 25 stations of Teca-branded CV and resistance equipment, supplied by On Site Fitness

## ► breaking barriers

With the facilities and programmes in place, the next step for the DCSF was to get as many staff as possible working out. Incentives to encourage use of the gym were thought about long and hard.

Free membership was one option, says Bell, "but was opted against on the grounds that we want people to have some commitment to what they take part in". However, they didn't want "the commitment being a barrier." The DCSF therefore settled on a £16 a month membership package, including two free classes a week, with no contract, no admin and no joining fee. Additional classes cost £2.

A condition of use is for gym members to also join the CSSC at a rate of £3.15 a month. This money will then help to fund other discounted leisure activities for civil servants and their families, such as taster days for different sports like sailing and fencing.

In terms of usage, DCSF staff are permitted to use the facility at any time during their working day – like most of the civil service departments, the DCSF offers flexible working. This tends to spread gym usage out across the day, but generally the busiest periods are mornings and during lunch.

To cater for the high number of employees who run and cycle to work, the DCSF has also increased changing and shower facilities. Bell adds: "Don't underestimate the convenience of having



## DCSF is looking at introducing occupational health referrals, like GP referrals, to encourage gym use

a fitness facility at work: it means, when I arrive early in the morning, I can fit in my hour's gym session and shower before the working day even begins."

Since opening in December 2008, more than 300 employees have joined the SHFC, and it attracts around five new members a week.

Bell feels positive about membership levels but is concerned about retention: "The issue, like every gym, is whether people translate their first flush of enthusiasm into sustainable day-to-day practices. We need to work on getting people to regularly attend."

To break even, the centre must retain 500 members. However, Alpha and the DCSF are not profit-driven. Bell says: "Alpha and CSSC only exist to support the civil service and cabinet office by providing sport and leisure opportunities. What little percentage of income Alpha takes from membership is put straight back into delivering sport and leisure through the CSSC."

### occupational support

To further boost membership, Alpha and the DCSF are considering opening up SHFC to neighbouring government departments. Alpha is also canvassing

staff interest in sports massage and classes including yoga and pilates.

In addition to this, Alpha and the DCSF are entertaining the idea of making exercise – and SHFC facilities – a part of the department's occupational health scheme.

Like most organisations, the DCSF makes occupational health advice available to staff as part of a sickness and absence management policy. The existing scheme offers guidance and assistance to employees on how to prevent work-related ill health, manage stress and maintain productivity. However, the department is now thinking about introducing occupational health referrals, which it sees working on a similar basis as GP referrals. Peed hopes that giving referrals free gym passes for at least six weeks will break down any barriers and encourage permanent membership.

Bell adds: "Most people have a rather narrow view of occupational health as something you're referred to for help only if you're sick. We have to see it not as a negative but as positive support for wellbeing and lifestyle."



caroline wilkinsons  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

## MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

The Ministry of Justice's in-house gym in London has also recently received a £90,000 revamp. The fitness suite, at the government offices in Petty France, now features 35 stations of Physique's range of resistance equipment, Life Fitness CV stations and Hoist Fitness' Roc-It equipment.

It is operated by Energy Fitness Professionals, the company which already manages 42 corporate gyms including at the Cabinet Office, the HM Treasury, the Royal Courts of Justice, and 20 at Royal Mail.





## GYM & FITNESS EQUIPMENT AUCTIONS AT **WWW.AUCTIONFITNESS.CO.UK**

Buy and sell fitness and exercise equipment here – register FREE. You can bid and buy from a wide range of Commercial or Home Use fitness equipment.

**Sellers...** Add your Commercial or Home Fitness Equipment FREE, as many times as you like, for as long as you like. All we ask for is a small fee when your fitness equipment sells.

**Buyers...** Find a huge range of exercise equipment at your fingertips. Search our listings for Treadmills, Cross Trainers, Bikes, Rowing Machines, Strength and Resistance Equipment, Weights and fitness, exercise and gym accessories.

**Bid for a Better Body now!**

Register today  
To Win a  
**Wii Fit**



**AuctionFitness**  
2015



# research round-up

## mind games

Australian researchers have discovered that exercise may help improve cognitive function in older adults. We find out more

As the world's population ages, the number of older adults living with Alzheimer's disease is predicted to rise from the current 26.6 million people to 106.2 million people by 2050. "If illness onset could be delayed by 12 months, 9.2 million fewer cases of Alzheimer's would occur worldwide," say the authors of a recent study looking into how exercise may help to improve cognitive function in older adults.

The study, conducted at the University of Melbourne and published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, comprised a randomised trial among 138 adults aged 50 and over who reported memory problems but who did not meet the criteria for dementia.

The participants were split into two groups. The first group received educational material about memory loss, stress management and diet. The second group was also offered this material, but in addition took part in a 24-week home-based physical activity survey. The aim was to encourage the latter group to perform at least 150 minutes – three 50-minute sessions – of moderate intensity physical activity each week. Activities included ballroom dancing, gym circuits, swimming and, most frequently recommended, walking.

Cognitive function was assessed with the Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Scale-Cognitive Subscale (ADAS-Cog), a measuring tool comprising a number of cognitive tests.

### the results

The group assigned to exercise took part in 142 minutes' more physical activity each week and received moderately better ADAS-Cog scores and delayed recall scores – the ability to recall a piece of information a given period of time after it was learnt – than those who just received standard care. They also received a lower clinical dementia rating score.

The study authors say: "The benefits of physical activity were apparent after six months and persisted for at least another 12 months after the intervention had been discontinued.

"The average improvement of 0.69 points on the ADAS-Cog score compared with the usual care control group at 18 months is small but potentially important when one considers the relatively modest amount of physical activity undertaken by the participants in the study."



PICTURE:WWW.STOCK.COM/PAUL PEBINGA

Exercise can help elderly people with memory problems

### how exercise helps the brain

**S**PARK, a book by John Ratey, a psychiatrist at Harvard Medical School, pulls together evidence from the past 10 years which shows that exercise is the most powerful tool in optimising brain function.

The studies show that exercise releases chemicals which bolster the brain's infrastructure. One of these – a protein called BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor) – has a profound impact on brain development. The beneficial effects of BDNF are stunted by the pressures of modern living, but just a small amount of activity can trigger its release. In addition, higher activity levels help to produce proteins and enzymes that get rid of waste products that clog the brain and cause sluggish thinking.

Dr Ratey's gold standard is one hour of moderate exercise (power walking or jogging) four days a week and a 45-minute burst of intense activity (such as running) twice a week, combined with strength training and balance classes.

An in-depth interview with Dr Ratey will appear in *HCM* July.



**More than 500  
exhibitors from  
38 countries!**

**[www.fibo.de](http://www.fibo.de)**

**Innovation. Contacts. Opportunities.**

**FIBO 2009**

**23 - 26 April 2009 • Exhibition Centre Essen • Germany**

**The Leading International Trade Show for Fitness, Wellness & Health**



Organized by FIBO Niederlassung der Reed Exhibitions Deutschland GmbH, Volklinger Str. 4, 40219 Düsseldorf, Germany  
Tel: +49(0)211 90191-300 Fax: +49(0)211 307579-16 Mail: [info@fibo.de](mailto:info@fibo.de)

"SDA bring a refreshing new approach  
to leisure management software and  
we are delighted with the results."

**Robert Warner** Finance Director Tone Leisure

## More tools for leisure...



Web-based leisure management  
software installed on your servers for  
 outright purchase or monthly rental.

**LeisurePoint**

Web-based leisure management  
software installed on our secure  
servers for a low monthly fee.

**SDAconnect**

Web-based software to  
create and send great-looking  
subscriber email campaigns.



.NET technology that's tried, tested and available now.

To find out more call 0870 607 1966,  
[email sales@sdasolutions.com](mailto:sales@sdasolutions.com) or click [sdasolutions.com](http://sdasolutions.com)

©2009 Stuart Dyson Associates Ltd. All rights reserved.



Ref: HCM0309



# all together now

Kate Cracknell asks how important group exercise is to health clubs, and looks at the latest innovations in this area

**M**ember loyalty. That's the Holy Grail for health clubs, with all number of programmes and software packages designed to help improve retention rates. But are we losing sight of one of the simpler tools at our disposal to help retain members?

Of course it's only one part of the jigsaw, but evidence suggests that those who take part in group exercise classes stay with a club for longer than those who don't participate. So should we be aiming to get more people involved in group exercise, and if so, how?

## using the gym floor

Getting men to participate in group exercise is always a challenge – but does it matter, provided they establish their own routines in, for example, the free weights area?

Yes, according to Rob Beale, group health and fitness manager for David Lloyd Leisure (DLL). "It's very important. It doesn't matter if the member's male or female – if you can get them involved in group exercise, they'll stay with you for longer," he explains.

Beale acknowledges that there are fewer classes that appeal to men – "Men prefer classes that aren't too heavily choreographed," he explains – but says that timetabling can help to draw them in. It is, he says, simply a case of identifying the classes men do participate in – such as group cycling, circuits and boxing – and ensuring at least one of these is scheduled every evening.

As these are all sessions that can be delivered on the gym floor, this also ties in with one of DLL's objectives for 2009. Beale explains: "We're aiming to create more small group sessions on the gym floor – Power Plate, Kinesis, Strider [Keiser's new group elliptical trainer], circuit training and so on.

"This makes the gym floor more energetic and interactive, boosts participation in group exercise and gives members the confidence to use those bits of equipment when they're training on their own. It may also give men a taste for group exercise and encourage them to take part in studio sessions."

Michael Steel, EU representative for efi Sports Medicine, believes this gym floor approach will gather momentum.

"People like taking part in group activities," he explains. "That applies to any club, but Lava Sport & Fitness in San Diego, US, is a great example of how it can work when you push it to the extreme. The whole place consists of large areas offering group activities – there's a group cycling area, 20 GRAVITY trainers, four boxing rings with loads of punch bags and so on – and when you look around, you see specialist instructors interacting with members working out in each of those areas."

## broadening access

Steel continues: "Group activity isn't just about step classes. If you want to attract new audiences, you have to offer different types of activity – not movement- or choreography-based sessions but, for example, functional exercise on machines where people can work at their own level, but in a dynamic environment with good music and an instructor to support them."

This flexibility to work at your own level is an important point. Most instructors acknowledge different abilities and fitness levels within a class, while disciplines such as yoga and pilates tend to be delivered in beginners, intermediate and advanced sessions. But how many members are put off classes because they don't think they're fit enough? Group cycling, for example, attracts a loyal following but scares off a large proportion of members.

"Group cycling was launched as a high-intensity workout and, even now, instructors tend to gear the class to the people in the front row," says Keiser's founder and co-owner Dennis Keiser. "It shouldn't be like that. You shouldn't rule people out by making it too hard. Gear your class to the people in the back row."

**Striding out** Keiser's new, small footprint 'Strider' elliptical is designed for use in group exercise classes







**Main event** Lava Sport & Fitness stages group sessions on the main gym floor (above and right)

Elaine Coulthard, national fitness and retention manager for JJB Fitness, adds: "Fitness clubs are more than places of exercise; they're social meeting places, and group exercise classes harness the social element for members. Going to the gym must be an enjoyable experience. For many members, fitness is often a secondary goal; they join for friendship."

### Staff training

Good instructors are key to delivering compelling group exercise – to the point that, in some cases, member loyalty ends up being as much to the instructor as to the club. This opens up a whole new discussion about staff retention, but in the end, it's in clubs' interests to employ people who can engage with members and secure their regular attendance. Investing in staff training is, therefore, vital.

With this in mind, JJB Fitness has appointed eight expert group exercise ambassadors, each responsible for their own specific discipline – from functional training to dance, aerobics to combat, and with a former Shaolin monk in charge of yoga, tai chi and pilates. The ambassadors run free REPs-accredited workshops for JJB instructors, and even freelance instructors working at JJB, passing on



the latest techniques and routines for instructors to use with members.

"The majority of questions we receive at point of sale are about what classes are available, so this will be a key selling point for JJB Fitness, encouraging member loyalty," says Coulthard.

DLL, meanwhile, has been working closely with Keiser to maintain standards in the delivery of group cycling. "The popularity of these sessions relies heavily on the quality of the instructor," says Colston. "DLL felt attendance was tailing off slightly, so we helped them set up a new training system for their staff. Through the DLL Campus, the chain's training facility, we

auditioned people to become master trainers, and we selected five.

"These regional trainers now go around all the DLL clubs, training the trainers to deliver excellent group cycling classes. We'll look to create the same training set-up for Strider."

### novelty and innovation

Regularly refreshing your class schedule, creating new sessions to tempt different types of people into the studio, is a great way of keeping members engaged. Operators such as Gymbox (see p54) in the UK and CRUNCH in the US are well known for their diverse, off-the-wall classes that promise fun yet effective





**Hands up** Gymstick, a bar with resistance, has launched a waterproof product for aqua classes (above)



▶ workouts. Others, Virgin Active among them, have staff whose responsibility it is to come up with new ideas – a clear acknowledgement of the importance of innovation and creativity to the business – while the JJB ambassadors are also charged with developing new concepts.

However, according to personal trainer Winston Squire, the buzz of creativity has been lost in many chains, with a group exercise offering that is becoming standardised. “Licensed group exercise programmes are great for consistency, which is good for clubs because anyone can deliver the classes,” he explains. “However, the sessions are always very similar. If you really want to create a buzz among members, you need to offer new things.

“I think creativity levels are much better, as a rule, in local authority sites and church halls – places where individuals have used their imagination in developing the classes.”

Nevertheless, there are some exciting innovations in group fitness. We highlight a selection of the latest concepts.

## 1 from Broadway to the ski slopes

US operator CRUNCH changes its schedule four times a year, introducing five to 10 new classes each time. Its latest offerings include the following:

- Go Pogo!, a circuit-style class that uses the Fly bar (a modern day pogo stick) to deliver “one heck of a cardio workout”.
- Indo Winter Boarding, which uses the new Indo Board and a body bar to simulate the instability of a snowboard or skis, thereby sculpting long, lean legs.
- AntiGravity Yoga, where participants perform yoga moves while suspended from the ceiling in special hammocks (see HCM Jan 09, p83).

● Billy Elliot The Musical, part of the club’s Broadway Dance Series, with cast members teaching participants choreography from the show using music from the original cast recording.

## 2 singing, sensuality and aquacycling

Club Med, the chain of clubs dotted around Paris, places a large focus on group exercise – it offers more than 2,000 classes across its 22 clubs each week, and 60 per cent of members participate in group exercise.

Its newest classes include Chanter C’est du Sport (Singing is Sport), which draws on the physical and therapeutic benefits of singing. Designed to promote general wellbeing and reduce stress, the class uses a range of techniques such as breathing and relaxation before moving on to singing and moving to the music.

Its Sensual Move class, meanwhile, encourages women to let out their femininity in a combination of sexy, fluid, graceful yet smouldering moves. Designed to get participants more in-tune with their body, the class requires no previous dance experience.

Finally, Aquacycling combines the benefits of group cycling and aqua-aerobics. Using special bikes designed to function correctly underwater, it offers a CV workout suitable for all: from regular exercisers, to pregnant women whose additional weight is supported by the water, to older exercisers who may benefit from less stress on their joints.

## 3 gymstick aqua

Virgin Active already runs Gymstick classes in the UK – the Gymstick being a bar with bands attached to each end which provides resistance while carrying out a wide range of exercises, from simple



**Club Med**, a chain of Parisian clubs, offers group classes with singing and moving to music (top) and aquacycling (above)

bicep curls and leg extensions to pilates moves. Now Gymstick has launched Gymstick Aqua, a waterproof version of the stick with a non-slip grip, to allow for sessions to be conducted in a pool.

## 4 group ellipticals

DLL is due to introduce Keiser’s new group elliptical product, Strider, to its clubs. Strider has the same sized footprint as a group cycling bike, and the concept is for classes to be run in the same way as group cycling, either in a zone on the gym floor or in a separate studio, with an instructor at the front leading the session. The stride is shorter and higher than on standard ellipticals, creating a more intense workout and activating additional muscle groups.



**kate cracknell**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com



**MATRIX**  
human engineering



changing the rules

0800 389 6078  
[www.matrixfitness.co.uk](http://www.matrixfitness.co.uk)



# new perspective

COLIN MILNER, CEO OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ACTIVE AGING, OFFERS PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR FACILITIES TO ENSURE THEY'RE GEARED UP FOR OLDER EXERCISERS



**Fitting in** It's important that clubs and centres have a culture which is inclusive and accepting of older exercisers

**W**hat do you know about the older adult market? What do any of us know about it? We know that there are 17 million Baby Boomers in the UK and that the number of pensioners now exceeds those under the age of 16 for the first time. We know that, by 2031, the 65-plus segment will account for 23 per cent of the country's population. We also know that the average life expectancy in the UK is now 77.3 years for men and 81.5 years for women.

Never before have so many people lived for so long. This single fact – longer life – is impacting on economies, businesses, governments, communities, families and individuals. And it's creating unprecedented challenges and opportunities for fitness facility designers and developers, programme and service providers, trainers, equipment manufacturers and operators.

Is your centre ready to attract and retain the richest, largest and fastest-growing segment of the population? Ask yourself this: if a 50-year-old came into your club, would they find a facility, programmes, services and staff ready to meet their needs? Like many in the industry, you may answer that you just don't know. If you aren't sure, now is the time to find out; for the next 15 to 20 years, the Baby Boomers and their parents will not only be part of one of the most significant global occurrences of our generation – population ageing – but they will also be your core client.

## FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE

A mystery member programme may be just the approach you need to gain a realistic picture of how older customers

perceive your organisation. So how do you go about implementing this?

The first step is to recruit the right people for the job. Find individuals who fit the profile of your older prospects and who are able to retain their impressions of each visit well enough to write a complete report afterwards, as well as to talk about their experience.

Over the next three pages, we outline some of the areas you might like to ask your mystery members to assess, including sample questions to include on your questionnaire to them.

To ensure that your mystery members offer you an accurate picture of their experiences, ask them to consider each element on your questionnaire, and also to answer the following question: "How did you feel about...?" Their responses will help you to understand where your facility must do better.

Once your mystery members have completed their reports, go back through the responses using a camera to capture their experiences. Place these pictures, along with the report, on a storyboard in your office for all to see. Then hold a staff meeting, walking staff members through your clients' experiences. When you have completed this process, you should have a task list for each department to use to improve the experiences you offer. This may involve anything from the way your facility lays out equipment to the way staff treat a client.

Unless you know what your older members experience in your facility, you will never be able to give them the experiences they're looking for. And in these days of population ageing, what's good for your older members is good for your business.





ALL PICTURES WWW.ISTOCK.COM

**Testing times** A mystery member programme will give you a realistic picture of how older customers perceive your organisation

#### YOUR STARTER FOR 10

Your mystery members should begin their feedback by answering the general questions below:

- ❖ Did you feel welcomed and at home in the facility?
- ❖ Were staff members friendly?
- ❖ Was the environment at the health club intimidating?
- ❖ Was the salesperson's presentation non-threatening, positive and informative?
- ❖ Did the salesperson outline what you would experience as a member?

*You need to ask yourself this: is your centre ready to attract and retain the richest, largest and fastest-growing segment of the population?*

#### MARKETING ANALYSIS

Other areas you might like your mystery members to evaluate include marketing – odds are that the first thing a potential member learns about your organisation will come from an advertisement, a

piece of direct mail, a poster, a billboard, a lecture, a sales call or a website. Questions could include:

- ❖ Did the marketing material address your needs and goals?
- ❖ Was it age-friendly? Did it use older models and appropriate copy?
- ❖ Did it accommodate vision changes – eg did it use larger type size, more white space, easy-to-read colour combinations?
- ❖ Did it tell a story that resonates with you at this time of life, setting the stage for your experience?
- ❖ Did it communicate that the club welcomes people like you, or did it create barriers to participation?
- ❖ Was it engaging? Did it encourage you to contact the club?



### THE INITIAL PHONECALL

The next step is for the mystery members to call your organisation and arrange a visit, then assess how your staff responded to the call.

Sample questions include:

- ❖ Was the staff member who answered the call friendly, polite and respectful?
- ❖ Did they speak clearly and naturally, at a volume and pace appropriate for adults who may have hearing issues?
- ❖ Did they give you the information you requested, inspiring you to learn more about the organisation and the experiences it offers?
- ❖ Did they encourage you to visit the club to see if it met your needs?
- ❖ Did they arrange a time for the visit and ask how you heard of them?

### ACCESSING THE CLUB

When they arrive, mystery members should look at the following points.

These may sound trivial, but frustration from a negative experience with these elements can affect the rest of a person's visit:

- ❖ Did the facility provide well-signed, accessible parking?
- ❖ Did the facility have a ramp or curb cut into the pavement? Was this area kept clear?
- ❖ Was the pathway wide enough (36") for someone in a wheelchair, or with a companion, to negotiate? Was there enough room for someone with a mobility aid to turn around?
- ❖ Was the lighting adequate?

*Initially older adults may feel uncomfortable in a fitness environment... The right atmosphere will encourage potential members to join your facility*

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Assuming your mystery members make it as far as your facility's front door without being turned off, their experiences in the next 30 to 60 minutes will dictate whether or not they will – at least in theory – become a member of your facility.

Your mystery shoppers may want to watch out for the following:

- ❖ Were interior/exterior doors heavy and/or difficult to open (more than five pounds of force needed)?
- ❖ Could the doors be opened without hardware that requires grasping, pinching or twisting?
- ❖ Did the lobby have an area where new mature members could congregate and socialise?
- ❖ Could the customer service/reception area accommodate someone using a mobility aid or service animal, such as a guide dog?

### THE COMFORT FACTOR

Initially, older adults may feel ambivalent or uncomfortable in a wellness or fitness environment. They may doubt their ability to function in this setting, and question whether or not they can use the

equipment and use it safely. The right atmosphere will encourage prospects to join your club, so ask mystery members to pay close attention to your facilities and services in their assessment. Questions should include:

- ❖ Was the facility's atmosphere welcoming and comfortable?
- ❖ Was the facility intimidating? If so, how did it intimidate you?
- ❖ Was the music too loud or inappropriate, especially for those with hearing aids?
- ❖ Did you feel that the club's culture was inclusive and accepting of older adults? If not, why not?
- ❖ Were there images of older adults on posters? Did these represent the facility's mature members?
- ❖ Was equipment in good working order and of accessible design, eg step-through recumbent bikes?
- ❖ Did the facility highlight equipment considered appropriate for older adults, such as machines offering low weight resistance options and/or easily adjustable kit?
- ❖ Did the changing rooms offer enough privacy for users?
- ❖ Were the signs in the facility easy to read and up-to-date?



**Tailor made** Do your programmes meet the needs of those with functional limitations or a variety of chronic health conditions?





**A point in the right direction** Facilities should make it easier for older members by highlighting the pieces of equipment that are most appropriate for them

#### STAFF EXPERTISE

The staff and programming should also be assessed, using questions such as:

- ❖ Were there introductory classes or demonstrations specifically designed and marketed to the ageing member?
- ❖ Could older people with health issues receive a free trial visit to assess the degree to which the facility and programmes meet their needs?
- ❖ Was there an extensive screening/assessment process covering balance, functional abilities, osteoporosis etc?
- ❖ Did the facility offer programmes for those with a variety of chronic

health conditions such as osteoporosis, heart disease, diabetes, balance abnormalities and muscular weakness?

- ❖ Had staff received training in providing services to older members with functional limitations, chronic health conditions or disabilities?
- ❖ Were staff members able to modify movements as needed?
- ❖ Were staff members knowledgeable about the impact that medication can have on exercise ability?
- ❖ Were staff trained to recognise warning symptoms of fatigue and distress and respond appropriately?

#### MAKING THE SALE

An older audience dislikes being overtly 'sold' to. Points to assess in terms of winning over prospects and making the sale include:

- ❖ Was the salesperson friendly, polite and welcoming? Or was the person condescending or disrespectful?
- ❖ Did they ask about your health history at any point, as well as about your past experiences with physical activity and your goals?
- ❖ Were they able to answer your questions about specific health issues in enough detail, and discuss how programmes would be created to

address these issues and accommodate your abilities?

- ❖ Did they introduce you to existing older members who could share their experiences with you?
- ❖ Did they provide information on how the facility tailors its experience to older adults – for example, appropriate assessments, staff training, amenities etc?
- ❖ Were membership contracts and other materials in font sizes that were large and easy to read?



**colin milner**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

# NORDIC WALKING

The complete solution to successful programming



Training • Equipment • Marketing  
all provided

**NORDICWALKING.CO.UK**  
**0845 260 9339**



# THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Emilie Filou gives her verdict on the third Gymbox, which opened in the Bank area of central London in September 2008, after visiting the club as a mystery shopper

## BEFORE THE VISIT

Gymbox's website encapsulates its philosophy. Tongue-in-cheek advertising – "Finally. An ad about getting big and hard that didn't originate from a Russian spam account" – rotates on the home page, while the 'take a tour' video, with funky soundtrack, captures the club's urban, young, cool vibe.

There is no information about membership, however – just a 'when can I join?' tag. Click on it and you're asked to fill in your details so the gym can contact you. I'm still waiting.

I called a few days later. A gentleman answered promptly.

The "person who deals with membership" was not there, so he took my name and number and said he'd pass on my details. With no call back by the following afternoon, I decided to call again. I was transferred to the membership advisor, who immediately suggested I come in for a tour. I asked about the possibility of trying out a class and was told I could buy a £20 guest pass that would give me access to all classes, refundable if I decided to join.

I wanted to visit in the evening peak time, when the DJ would be on, to get a better feel for the club. However, the membership advisor could only do early morning or lunch time because of his shift – I would have expected them to be more flexible when dealing with a prospective customer – so we arranged to meet at 8.30am the next day.

## LOCATION

The Bank location is spot on: it's on Lombard Street, which is a signposted exit from Bank tube station, and the Gymbox sign is visible as you walk up the stairs. That morning, a giant class timetable featuring Gymbox's cheeky class names stood guard outside the club, catching people's attention (see

details below right) – wouldn't you do a double-take if you saw Chav Fighting or Bitch Boxing plastered on the wall?

## THE TOUR

The membership advisor was relaxed and jokey but professional. He showed me around, checking what I was interested in and pointing out some of the gym's funkier features – the DJ box in the main gym, the iPod and USB ports on the Life Fitness equipment, and the vault doors dating back to when the site was Lloyds TSB's headquarters.

Gymbox is definitely a cool-looking place. It has a distinct underground/industrial feel with its vault features, and an urban jungle edge to the décor, with coloured walls and laser lights – definitely more Fabric than Fitness First. It's a big space too, with a huge boxing area, three studios, a large free weights room and a massive open plan gym with stretching areas at either end.

The visit lasted 15 minutes; we then talked money. The joining fee is normally £175, but I was offered £70 including an hour's PT with their "Very Personal Trainers", or £40 without PT. Payment options were clearly explained in a leaflet: £78 a month without contract, £68 a month with a one-year contract, and £748 for a year if paid in full upfront.

Although the visit was comprehensive and the membership advisor professional, I didn't feel I got a real sense of what the place was about. It was mostly empty, it being 8.30–9am, and apart from its cool design, a little underwhelming considering the hype – no sign of the human weights touted only that week in the local press, no glow-stick classes or resident DJ. Surely what makes Gymbox unique is this irreverent, wacky take on fitness, so why not showcase it?



Gymbox aims to put the fun into working out, with its human weights (above), plus a wide range of classes and 'Very Personal Trainers'



## WORD PLAY

Gymbox has unleashed its creative streak with the names and descriptions of its classes. Here are a few of my favourites:

- Chav Fighting – protect yourself from the "youf" of today. Self-defence à la mickey-take
- Ass(et) Management – a 30-minute "booty blaster"
- Bitch Boxing – a proper boxing class, in the ring, girls only
- Cheerleading – "Gimme a G, gimme a Y, gimme an M." You get the picture





## VISIT NUMBER TWO

I decided to go in the next day for a second bite of the cherry, this time at peak hour, guest pass in hand.

And what a let-down. It was certainly busier than the previous morning, but nowhere near full, and definitely emptier than I would have expected. The music had been turned up a notch, but there was no DJ in sight, despite me being there between 6pm and 8pm – the designated slot. My Step-a-Jam class was fine but average – although to be fair, the instructor supposed to run the class was stuck in a meeting and another instructor was put on the spot at the last minute. Fight Klub, a kick-boxing inspired class, was better, but still nothing to rave about.

## AUDIENCE

Bank is at the heart of the City, and Gymbox's clients very much reflect the local demographics: young, trendy (lots of designer sweatpants and flashy trainers) and reasonably well-off, with the only difference being that Gymbox has a fairly good male/female balance.

## CONCLUSION

I must say that I really expected more from Gymbox. Perhaps I'd had my expectations raised too high by the hype generated by some of its quirkier stunts (the human weights, for example) and its clever corporate image. Perhaps I'd aligned my expectations of the fitness offering with the quality of the environment. Whatever the reason, though, I couldn't help but feel the disappointment of unfulfilled promises (where's my DJ?) and felt I'd fallen for the typical trap whereby all that glitters is not gold.

Gymbox is an attractive environment, which probably resonates with its image-conscious clientele. But my concern

is that, in these cash-strapped times, even those not normally inclined to scrimping and saving will demand top bang for their buck. And at £78 a month plus joining fee, for what it offers – there's no pool, for example – Gymbox wouldn't pass my value-for-money test.

**ENVIRONMENT:** 9/10 – REALLY SPACIOUS, FUNKY, YOUNG AND DYNAMIC

**EXPERIENCE:** 5.5/10 – AVERAGE

**VALUE:** 3/10 – I FELT YOU GOT LESS FOR YOUR MONEY THAN AT OTHER, LESS 'SEXILY' PACKAGED CLUBS



**emilie flou**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

## RIGHT OF REPLY – GYMBOX

"We're very pleased that the journalist enjoyed the Gymbox look and feel. The club is trading well, with membership numbers exceeding budget. However, it had only been open three months when the journalist visited, so the fact that it wasn't full doesn't surprise us.

We're surprised that the initial enquiry call was not returned that day – this was probably due to the membership consultants being extremely busy at the end of January.

With regards to some of the other issues, we can confirm that Step-a-Jam was covered by a cover instructor and the DJ called in sick on the date the journalist attended; illness aside, DJs are in the clubs every evening, Monday to Thursday. Classes are a key component of the Gymbox product – more than 100 a week in each club, taught by the best instructors in the business, with new and exciting classes constantly created to entertain and stimulate members."



# THE WEIGHTING GAME

Fitness equipment manufacturers are recognising the benefits, for both operators and members, of offering structured, off-the-shelf weight management packages. Tina Milton examines three of the latest initiatives on the market

**T**he issues of weight management and obesity are never long out of the spotlight. The government estimates that 90 per cent of children will be overweight or obese by 2050 unless the issue is addressed, while the Department of Health estimates that a quarter of adults in England would be classified as obese.

Combine this with the advent of Change4Life, an initiative that aims to kick start a 'lifestyle revolution' in every family by promoting healthy eating and exercise (see Talkback, p26), and it's not surprising that weight management is playing an increasingly significant role in the overall offering at health clubs.

In response, a number of fitness equipment manufacturers are offering structured, 'off-the-shelf' weight management programmes, which combine use of their equipment with nutritional advice for members and support for operators.

Patrick Murray, chief operating officer of Trixter, says: "There are benefits for all. For health clubs, it's a chance to drive additional spend while providing an extra service for members, the majority of whom usually join the gym to lose weight or change their body shape. If we keep the end users happy by helping to deliver the results they're paying their gym fees for, then we'll be doing a good job for club owners."

## FITBUG

Fitbug's weight management programme for health clubs is so hot off the press that its name is yet to be confirmed. But it's based on Back to Basics: a 12-month weight management initiative that Fitbug operated within the Bradford and Airedale Teaching PCT, with striking results.

The Back to Basics pilot scheme, which started in January 2008 with more than 200 patients, was created for adults with a BMI over 30 and an associated chronic disease such as Type 2 diabetes. Its aim was to support and motivate patients to lose weight, and to reduce medication and other measures of health risk.

Managed in association with a chronic disease nurse, the scheme combined health literature and cognitive behavioural therapy with the use of Fitbug as an online health coach. Participants wore the 'bug' – an interactive 'third generation' pedometer with online tracking capabilities – which monitored exercise activity, sending the data to fitbug.com. Progress was assessed at weekly meetings and patients were supported with personalised weekly activity and nutrition targets, text messages and emails. The mean weight loss of patients at six months was 7.3kg, and 8.5kg at nine months.

The success of the Back to Basics PCT pilot prompted Fitbug to repackaging the scheme as a 12-week weight management course for health clubs. This new programme includes course material and packs for participants, including a Fitbug pedometer and a log-in for fitbug.com, plus management reporting assessments to track user progress and a day's training for fitness instructors.

In the first week, participants are issued with the packs and encouraged to keep a food diary. The activity data from their Fitbugs is then assessed, and

food and activity plans are set according to requirements. Support and targets are given at weekly meetings, online, by phone and by email.

Fitbug MD Paul Landau explains: "The programme is extremely interactive and allows clubs to maintain contact with participants throughout the course, rather than just seeing them once a week and hoping they hit their targets."

The programme also includes a 12-month Fitbug membership, so activity can be tracked after the course finishes and clubs can offer extra support if needed.

Cost to clubs is £55 per employee plus a registration fee, which includes training. Participants' fees to attend the programme will vary by club but, as a guideline, would be £120 for the full 12 weeks or £10 per session.

Holmes Place International will adopt Fitbug and its weight management programme later on this year and Fitbug has also been working with independent operators Club Kingswood in Basildon and Market Sports in Shoreditch. Landau also sees potential for local authorities to use the campaign in conjunction with exercise referral programmes and is



**Stepping out** Activity levels will be tracked online via a Fitbug pedometer





**Equal measures** Trixter has two programmes, covering men and women

### TRIXTER

X-Bike manufacturer Trixter launched two gender-specific weight loss programmes at the end of last year. Gut Buster is a male-only scheme which focuses on the stomach region, while its female counterpart is Drop a Dress Size.

The four-week X-Bike based initiatives are founded on nutritional advice, exercises for the core and body, and X-Bike workouts. The two programmes are similar in nature: participants visit their health club twice a week and complete eight sessions in a month. At the start of the course, body measurements are noted as well as three reasons for signing up. Each participant receives a pack with a water bottle, a manual and a log book, which is stamped each time they attend a class. The sessions combine a 40- to 45-minute X-Bike workout with a 15-minute review of food diaries, drinking water intake and recipes and diet for the week ahead.

The target market is men and women in their mid-20s to early 50s, and Murray says participants can expect to lose between 4lbs and 8lbs.

Health clubs are provided with 1,000 postcards to promote the courses externally, with a view to then converting participants into full members. Murray explains: "The original idea was to provide an outreach programme to attract new members to health clubs. This allows operators to welcome participants for a specific number of fee-based classes, with an opportunity to sell membership when the course finishes."

The initiatives are also packaged for members – in-club marketing materials include 500 flyers, reception banners and posters for internal notice boards. Marketing packs are priced at £495 and

PICTURE: WWW.STOCK.COM/LEISE GAGNE



**Don't weight around** Participants can lose 4lbs–8lbs on the four-week course

participant packs cost approximately £5. Participants are then charged between £40 and £60 for eight sessions.

Each course includes a one-day training session for fitness instructors plus training manuals, session planners and music for each workout.

Both programmes were introduced at the Pulse 8 health club in Berkshire in January, and Drop a Dress Size ran at the Lee Carter club in Lancashire. One

participant at Lee Carter completed an additional X-bike session a week and dropped three dress sizes, while the manager took part and lost 4lbs. Both clubs are continuing to offer the courses.

Drop a Dress Size and Gut Buster are available to all of Trixter's existing and prospective customers; Liverpool City Council, Stevenage Leisure Trust and Impulse Leisure have already placed orders to adopt them. ▶





**In control** The Milon weight loss package targets women aged 40–49, linking exercise and diet on users' smartcards

#### ► MILON-MYLINE

Automated cardio-resistance circuit manufacturer Milon recommends that its eight-week workout programme is used alongside nutritional coaching from independent company myline®.

The relationship between myline and Milon was established in 1999 after gym members in Germany using the Milon circuit found they weren't always losing weight. Exercisers were rewarding themselves after exercising by eating unhealthy food – but the clubs didn't have the ability to monitor eating behaviour outside the club environment.

The course, aimed at women aged 40–49, comprises an eight-week

smartcard-controlled Milon circuit training and body scanning programme, followed by a review. Participants attend two 35-minute express circuit training sessions in 10 days, with the training results documented as participants check in and check out of the circuit. A dedicated computer then logs the intensity, resistance levels and time spent at each machine.

To complement the workout regime, myline runs eight two-hour seminars with a myline consultant. The sessions are split into three parts – healthy and low-fat nutrition, fat burning workout, and positive thinking – and the eight-week goal is to establish healthy cooking

and eating habits. Between 20 and 25 participants can attend each session, which at the outset involve recording the participants' weight, open discussions about eating habits, and a questionnaire to assess lifestyle and nutritional intake. Every week, participants are given a food plan, menus and healthy recipes. Myline also has its own healthy food range including snack bars and drinks.

It costs €899 to start a myline licence, which includes a training manual, an in-house coaching day for staff, and marketing training. The prices for participants are set at €269 for an eight-week course, which includes handouts, weekly coaching and use of the gym. There are about 350 myline-licensed clubs in Germany and Switzerland; about 350,000 people have lost an average of 6.5kg each with myline since 1987.

Milon's UK business development manager, Holm Hofmann, says: "Myline encourages cardiovascular strength training, which really ties in well with the Milon concept. Milon circuits are a social experience, and the myline seminars follow up on this and encourage a sense of community."

Milon has 1,000 circuits at clubs across Germany, and the company introduced its first UK circuit at Courtyard Health & Fitness in Gloucestershire this February. Of the club's 400 members, Hofmann anticipates a 60 per cent uptake on the Milon circuit equipment; the club is likely to adopt the weight management package in the future.



**Team effort** Nutritional advice is provided in conjunction with myline

**tina milton**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com



fitness-kit.net

The website, email and search engine for fitness buyers



Visit [fitness-kit.net](http://fitness-kit.net) for the latest news about products and services for the fitness industry

To advertise your product and reach over 8,000 fitness professionals a month call now on +44 (0)1462 431385 or email [fitness-kit@leisuremedia.com](mailto:fitness-kit@leisuremedia.com)

## FREE Could your Spa & Health Club benefit from a Business Health Check

The Odyssey Management Team are offering your Health Club or Spa business the opportunity to receive a FREE business health check, **worth over £1,000.**

**This FREE business health check includes a full review of your**

- Operational Process
- Financial Control to FD Level
- Sales Implementation & Management
- Marketing Appraisal
- Plus, Mystery Shop Report

For your FREE consultation contact us today.

**[healthcheck@odyssey-group.co.uk](mailto:healthcheck@odyssey-group.co.uk)**

Or, call **01438 728333**



**[odysseymanagement.co.uk](http://odysseymanagement.co.uk)**

A hands on approach that delivers proven results



## Original Changing Room WET KIT BAGS



All our bags are degradable and can be RECYCLED

We can now print your own logo on as few as 10,000 bags

visit **[www.kingswoodleisuredirect.co.uk](http://www.kingswoodleisuredirect.co.uk)** or call **01268-548987** for more details



suppliers to the leisure industry since 1984



# subscribe to spa business magazine



Read about the **spa owners, investors, developers and designers** who are **shaping the rapidly emerging global spa sector**



## SPECIAL OFFER

Add our fortnightly international spa recruitment, training and news publication, **spa opportunities**, to your subscription for only **£12** (UK only)

**subscribe online: [www.leisuresubs.com](http://www.leisuresubs.com)**

Alternatively please call our subline +44 (0)1462 471912 or fill out the form below and fax back to +44 (0)1462 433909

**PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING MAGAZINES:**

**Spa Business** ☐

UK £28, EU £38, Int £38, US/Canada £28, Student £18

**Spa Opportunities** ☐

UK £18, (add-on special price £12), EU £24, Int £24, Student £12

**Total subscription cost: £** ..... **I wish to pay by:** ☐ Visa, ☐ Mastercard, ☐ Maestro, ☐ AMEX, ☐ Invoice – purchase order No .....  
☐ Cheque (in £ Sterling – please make payable to The Leisure Media Company Ltd and post to the following address:  
Subscriptions, The Leisure Media Company Ltd, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1DJ, UK)

**Card No:** ..... **Expiry date:** ..... **Issue No:** .....

**Name:** ..... **Position:** ..... **Signature:** .....

**Company:** ..... **Main business of organisation:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Postcode:** .....

**Tel:** ..... **Fax:** ..... **Email:** .....



# franchise round-up

Franchises do comparatively well during a recession. Caroline Wilkinson provides a summary of what's available

**W**ith redundancies on the increase and people looking for alternatives that give them more control over their lives and a better work-life balance, franchises are ideal – and a great investment for redundancy money, according to Jasper Beauclair, director of Results Fitness franchise.

Jan Spaticchia, CEO of The énergie Group, agrees: "In a recession, where credit markets are in turmoil, expansion through franchisee investment continues with pace. The status of equity and loans remains critical, but banks are still lending within the franchising sector. Franchising allows companies to harness the power and passion of entrepreneurship. It takes less central capital to expand and the speed of growth is significantly higher than organic growth."

When énergie launched in 2003, health and fitness franchising was almost unheard of. Since then several – mainly

## RESULTS FITNESS

**R**esults Fitness has expanded its Results4U women-only and Results4Men franchise with the recent launch of Results4 V.T. – a vibration training studio package – and Results4 P.T., a standalone personal training package.

"Adding V.T. to Results4U is an excellent revenue generator, particularly for the female market which wants to reduce cellulite, tone and have an aerobic workout," says director Jasper Beauclair. By bolting on VT studios, clubs can expect to gain around £500 a month in extra membership.

American – operators have entered the marketplace and énergie has opened 80 clubs in five years. "Franchising can survive in a tough climate and grow from strength to strength, adapting to the market," says Spaticchia, who recently launched Fitless, a 'no frills' fitness club model, in response to the downturn.

Bolt-on franchises for health clubs are also growing, with an increase in personal training solutions, diet-focused offerings and education-based children's activities.

Fenella Lindsell, founder and director of Yoga Bugs, a provider of yoga classes for children, says: "While almost all



**Revenue driver** By adding a vibration training studio to an existing Results4U site, operators can expect to gain an additional £500 a month in extra membership fees

markets are being hit by the change in the economy, the education sector remains reasonably buoyant as government funding is channelled towards keeping children active to help reduce rising levels of obesity. The government's aim is to get every child doing two hours of quality physical activity during the school week and a further three hours outside school hours by the end of 2010."

Some non-health club franchises support these targets by offering curriculum-based exercise classes in schools and community facilities (see p64 for further details).

## DIET EXPRESS

**L**adies Workout Express has launched a franchise dedicated to providing diet and nutrition advice in health clubs and community centres.

The one-to-one consultancy has various programmes combining diet and exercise, including a 13-week family fitness programme, and offers members guaranteed weight loss or their money back.

Diet Express is designed to complement a health club's facilities and act as another revenue stream. A space is usually rented by the hour or weekly to cut out the need for long-term leasing agreements.

## serco leisure partners with ptc

**F**ranchiser London Fitness has joined up with operator Serco Leisure to introduce its Personal Training Centre (PTC) franchise into Serco-operated leisure centres across the UK. Personal trainers can buy in to and operate PTC franchises

at the cost of £750 per month and have the potential of earning up to £50,000 a year as a trainer at Serco centres. The franchise model takes a holistic approach to health and fitness, combining training with complementary therapies.



# health club-based franchises



Contours Express: Helping women reach goals

NAME OF FRANCHISE:	Contours Express	Curves	énergie Fitness Clubs, énergie Fitness for Women, énergie Personal Fitness, énergie SHOKK, énergie Day Spa, énergie Physio and Fitless by énergie	Feel Good Factory
YEAR ESTABLISHED:	1998	1995	2004 + subsequent launches	2006
FRANCHISE OFFER:	Ladies' fitness and weight loss centres offering a 30-minute fitness programme using resistance equipment	Low-cost set-up 30-minute hydraulic circuit and weight management counselling, for women only	Various franchise packages including no-frills clubs and businesses devoted to personal training, youth fitness, women's fitness and weight-loss solutions	Ladies-only inch loss and wellness centres targeting the over-50s.
FRANCHISE PACKAGE INCLUDES:	Training, equipment, marketing and set-up support	Training, equipment, marketing and a personal mentor to deliver pre-opening and post-opening support	Training, marketing and ongoing business support, onsite coaching, audits and training days. Equipment is only provided as part of énergie Fitness Clubs and énergie SHOKK franchises	Training in sales and management, ongoing support. Equipment can be leased over three years.
PERSONAL INVESTMENT:	£32,500–£49,200 plus VAT and a monthly management fee (£250 plus VAT or 5 per cent of turnover)	£21,900 (with additional set-up costs ranging from £10,000–£20,000). Royalty payments based on a percentage of revenue – minimum payment of £195 to a maximum of £495 a month	Franchise fees start from £11,700. A Fitness Clubs franchise starts from £60,000 with a 1 per cent marketing levy	A £5,000 initial fee plus £2,000 annual maintenance costs. Total cost for length of agreement is £9,000
PREMISES REQUIRED:	1,300–1,700sq ft (121–158sq m)	1,000–2,000 sq ft (92–186sq m)	Varies depending on the franchise	200–600sq ft (18–56sq m)
FRANCHISEE PROFILE:	Enthusiasm for fitness and helping women achieve their goals. Able to follow a proven franchise system	No qualifications needed	Not disclosed	No qualifications needed but a drive and determination to succeed is essential
POTENTIAL TURNOVER:	Approximately £99,500, based on 300 members	Not disclosed	Varies depending on the franchise	£112,000–£224,000 based on amount of equipment and reaching 100 per cent membership capacity
WEBSITE:	contoursexpress.co.uk	curves.com	energiefranchise.com	shapemaster.co.uk





**Gymphobics (above) and Curves (left) offer 30-minute workouts and target women only**

Gold's Gym	Gymphobics	pf2 licence	Results4U, Results4 P.T and Results4 V.T	Snap Fitness
1980	2005	2009	2008	2004
A fitness club offering personal training, group sessions, CV equipment, pilates and yoga	UK-based ladies' 30-minute workout in a health club environment, targeting the deconditioned market	A chain of standard fitness clubs with a strong focus on personal service and wellbeing. The licence is available in a range of packages tailored to the needs of the franchisee with varying levels of support	A chain of 30-minute fitness clubs dedicated to women and personal training, with the option of bolting on a vibration training studio (V.T.) or launching a standalone vibration facility	24-hour fitness facilities seeking franchisees to launch Snap Fitness in the UK (company founded in US/ Canada). Offers no contract memberships and can be run by one employee – 60 per cent of franchisees are absentee owners
Ongoing support, training and marketing material	Franchisees get their own territory to operate one or multiple clubs. Franchise package includes assistance in finding suitable premises, and ongoing support and training	Ongoing training in health club management, access to a support team of six in-house experts and up to 12 pf2 consultants, an electronic operations system, procurement assistance and marketing support	Marketing material, full training and ongoing support, from acquiring rent-free premises to equipment and choosing a colour scheme	Training, equipment, marketing and ongoing support
US\$961,000–US\$3.6m and US\$25,000 fee, plus a management fee (3 per cent of gross revenue) and 2 per cent advertising fee	£10,000 plus monthly management fee of £833. With the cost of equipment and set-up costs taken into account, the typical investment will be £35,000	An initial fee of £10,000 and an ongoing management fee of 3–8 per cent of turnover	Joining fee from £5,000, start-up costs from £13,500 and working capital from £2,000, a total personal investment from £4,800 and management fee from £4,800 a year	US\$77,343–US\$272,743 plus US\$499 monthly management fee
No minimum – whatever is market appropriate	1,500–2,200sq ft (139–204sq m)	Approximately 5,000sq ft (465sq m)	500sq ft, 750sq ft and 1,000sq ft (46–93sq m)	2,000–4,000sq ft (186–372sq m)
Commitment to the fitness industry	Dynamic individuals with a flair for sales and marketing. No gym experience required		Enthusiastic individuals with a strong fitness background and business acumen	Entrepreneurs with no prior experience in the fitness industry necessary
Not disclosed	Approximately £200,000	£290,000 with a ROI of around 30 per cent	£167,000 (PT), £190,000 (VT) and £216,000 (Results4U)	Not disclosed
goldsgym.com	gymphobics.co.uk	pf2uk.com	results4u.co.uk	snappfitness.com



# non-health club franchises



## ACTIVE KIDS

**Offer:** Multi-sport activity teaching in schools, for children aged three to 11, in the form of weekly classes, school schemes and family holiday programmes.  
**Cost:** £8,000 plus management fee (10 per cent of turnover).  
**Website:** activekids.biz

## LITTLE GYM

**Offer:** A curriculum-based programme of gymnastics for children aged four months to 12 years old.  
**Cost:** £150,000–£250,000 including working capital and excluding franchise fee of £49,000 for a 10-year agreement and an 8 per cent royalty fee.  
**Website:** thelittlegym.co.uk

## YOGA BUGS

**Offer:** Provider of yoga classes to children aged two to seven (Yoga Bugs) and eight to 12 (Yoga'd Up) through a network of qualified teachers.  
**Cost:** £15,000 plus VAT, 12 per cent of gross turnover and a 2 per cent marketing levy.  
**Website:** yogabugs.com

## LITTLE KICKERS

**Offer:** Provides football-mad pre-schoolers with a fun introduction to the sport. Appropriate for children aged 18 months to seven years.  
**Cost:** £6,500 plus VAT and a management fee of 10 per cent of gross revenue plus VAT.  
**Website:** littlekickers.co.uk

## FITKID

**Offer:** Children's community exercise classes run in schools, leisure centres, nurseries and community halls.  
**Cost:** From £7,500 plus ongoing management fee.  
**Website:** fitkid.co.uk

## BOND FITNESS

**Offer:** A fully-supported mobile personal training business  
**Cost:** Initial investment may vary, but royalty fee is 10 per cent from year one's fourth month, 11 per cent in the second year and 12 per cent in the third.  
**Website:** bondfitness.co.uk

## CLICK PERSONAL FITNESS

**Offer:** Support for setting up at-home or studio personal training businesses.  
**Cost:** £9,900 plus VAT and 10 per cent of turnover.  
**Website:** clickpersonaltraining.co.uk

## COACH ME SLIM AND TRIM

**Offer:** A six-week weight loss diet and fitness programme delivered in a one-to-one format or small group sessions.  
**Cost:** Licence fee is £3,995.  
**Website:** weightlossfranchise.co.uk

## IMPS CLUB

**Offer:** A martial arts-themed club for three- to seven-year-olds, designed around child development. Classes are conducted in primary schools, leisure centres and health clubs.  
**Cost:** £1,997 including licence fee and

**Wellbeing classes Yoga Bugs' franchises cater for kids aged two to 12, integrating wellness techniques and fun**

an ongoing management fee (10 per cent turnover or £100 per month).  
**Website:** impsclub.com

## TUMBLE TOTS

**Offer:** A physical activity and movement programme, designed for children aged two to five, to complement activities provided in a pre-school setting.  
**Cost:** £8,500, plus an annual franchise fee after the first year / 20 per cent of royalties.  
**Website:** leaps-and-bounds.co.uk

## ROSEMARY CONLEY

**Offer:** Diet and fitness club  
**Cost:** £20,000 plus VAT (reduced to £18,577 plus VAT for OCR/NVQ-qualified exercise instructors). Management fee is based on number of classes per week.  
**Website:** rosemmaryconley.com

## DIET EXPRESS

**Offer:** Diet and fitness programmes delivered through one-to-one consultations in a leisure facility.  
**Cost:** From £3,000 for a franchise fee and £100/month royalty fee or 5 per cent of income (whichever is greater).  
**Website:** dietexpress.co.uk



caroline wilkinson  
 healthclub@leisuremedia.com

## énergie fitness franchises – in over 80 locations nationwide

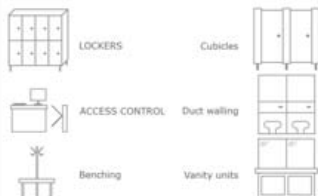


With the addition of the fitless brand, énergie group now offer 5 fantastic franchising opportunities. To find out more go to [www.energiefranchise.com](http://www.energiefranchise.com) or phone 0845 363 1020 quoting franchise opportunities



## A Change for the Better

For over 30 years, the Geschwender Concept System has established an enviable pedigree for attractive and durable bespoke leisure fit-outs throughout Europe. The combination of traditional skills, enthusiasm and thirty years of experience working with High Pressure Laminate (HPL) results in projects that bear the hallmark of quality. Now combined with Metra Electronic Locking Systems (ELS) and access control for fuller functionality.



UK and Ireland Partner



**Metra**

The Barn, White Horse Lane, Witham, Essex CM8 2BU

Phone: 01376 501199 Fax: 01376 502027

Email: [sales@LSAprojects.co.uk](mailto:sales@LSAprojects.co.uk)

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

**LSTA**  
projects limited

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

# MEDIMOTION

## A NEW INITIATIVE FOR YOUR GYM



Passive exercise for wheelchair users, the elderly, GP referrals, or rehabilitation

PROVIDES POSITIVE ACTION FOR POOR CIRCULATION. REDUCES OEDEMA AND IMPROVES THE FLEXIBILITY OF JOINTS

The new 'VIVA 2' state of the art Therapeutic Exerciser that can do it **ALL** for you

- FULLY PASSIVE MOTION
- ASSISTED ACTIVE MOTION
- OR FULLY ACTIVE

- Unique anti spasm control ensures safe and gentle continuous passive motion 240v • Operates at variable speeds and resistance to encourage progress and provides feedback on a large digital display
- Used extensively worldwide for rehabilitation and physiotherapy

**SOLE UK IMPORTER**

Contact us for a brochure: MEDIMOTION Ltd, PENCADER, CARMARTHENSHIRE SA39 9AZ





# NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Belts have been tightened but lease finance is still available and can help operators through challenging economic times. Guy Brown reports

**T**he leasing process begins with the operator identifying the equipment they require and the suppliers they wish to use. The operator then needs to provide some information about their business in order to secure finance. The term of lease can range from one to seven years, with three to five years typical. Once a leasing facility is in place, the leasing company pays the equipment supplier directly, with funds released after installation.

To give an idea of the kind of payments involved, consultant Rob Chorlton says, in a recent deal, Asset Advantage arranged for a single upfront fee of £15,400 and 15 quarterly payments of £15,400 + VAT on an original equipment cost of £245,000.

"Payments are made by direct debit, either monthly or quarterly, from a nominated bank account," says Alex Read, owner of Portman Asset Finance.

"The interest rate depends on a number of variables, including length of time trading, amount of finance required and equipment type. It's best to check for an up-to-date rate at the time of purchase."

The specifics of the leasing deal will vary. "Every deal is different," says Ian Hallam, sales manager for Shire Leasing, who explains that this is reflected in the different criteria on rates, time periods, payment plans and so on. Similarly Graham Partridge, director at Alliance and General Leasing, says they provide tailored proposals for each business.

In contrast to other providers, PTE offers its Solutions Finance Package – a complete bundle of fitness equipment, service and support, staff training and marketing material, all wrapped up in one fixed monthly payment.

Leasing helps a club to fix its overheads for a specific time, which as Partridge says, then enables an

**Fresh image** Having the latest equipment can help attract new customers – without breaking the bank in these challenging times

operator to determine the new business requirements. For example, an operator wanting to fund £30,000 of equipment over a five-year deal will make 60 monthly payments of £750, or £173.08 per week – which, explains Partridge, could be covered by signing up and retaining 22 new members paying an average of £35 a month.

## leasing benefits

Chesham Moor Gym & Swim in Buckinghamshire leased a range of gym equipment from PTE. "We decided to lease, simply because we are only in our third year of business and it was the most affordable option for us," says centre manager Danny Essex. "It enabled us to get the quality equipment our members expected, without a large capital outlay. The leasing option really suits our business as you can spread the cost over a period of time, meaning that we can use new membership sales to help pay for the equipment."

Essex adds that leasing can help give a club the edge: "It gives you the ability to freshen up your site without breaking the bank. Having the latest equipment helps us to attract new customers; in these difficult economic times, just





sitting back and waiting for them to walk through the door isn't enough."

By looking at costs on a monthly basis, operators often realise they can afford the equipment they really want, says Carol Bolton, sales manager for Admiral Leasing. "The customer who chooses to lease is left with more capital and bank facilities to invest in other areas of the business."

Phil Morris, business development manager for Admiral Leasing, PTE's leasing partner, says: "Cashflow is the most important consideration for any business, particularly in the current climate – cashflow problems can kill profitable businesses." Because bank facilities can be limited in the current climate, Morris advises clubs to lease or rent equipment, even if there is ready cash available, and spread the cost of the asset through a longer-term agreement. "This will enable the operator to conserve its cash, which will help see it through the difficult times we are currently experiencing," he says. "Leasing and rental agreements provide an ideal way to invest in new equipment and keep ahead of the competition, without putting the business cashflow under unnecessary pressure."

There are tax gains too. "Operators can offset 100 per cent of the payments as a revenue expense and they don't have to find the VAT on the total transaction as they would if purchasing," says Partridge. "VAT is paid on the monthly payments instead, and therefore

**Fixed overheads Leasing equipment allows operators to calculate the new business they must generate in order to cover the repayments**

the operator does not have to pay interest on the additional 15 per cent."

#### leasing increasing?

Leasing has always had takers, but has the economic crisis compelled more operators to choose this option when buying equipment?

Bolton says operators have long been aware of the benefits of leasing, but that Admiral Leasing has seen a "marked increase" in lease enquires, adding: "In the current climate, some banks are limiting traditional banking facilities, so operators are looking elsewhere for additional lines of credit."

PTE MD Graham Bertrand reports a similar picture of increased enquiries over the last six months: "Some operators that traditionally paid cash have begun to look at leasing as a way of maintaining investment and refurbishment without a negative effect on cashflow."

#### difficulty accessing finance

The credit crunch has inevitably impacted on leasing. "There is no doubt that the shortage of liquidity in the financial markets has had an impact on asset finance," says Bolton. "Funders have changed their lending criteria, for

example asking for higher deposits for new start operators."

He adds that there is a misconception in the marketplace: "Due to all the press about banks not wanting to lend money, many operators believe they will not be able to get lease facilities in place either. This is simply not the case. If you work with an established, reputable leasing company – even better if they are a funder too, so not completely reliant on external funding – most operators should be able to get lease facilities for new equipment."

But Bertrand says tightened criteria mean it's harder for smaller operators, standalone facilities and particularly new start-ups to secure lease finance, while Chorlton says it's unquestionably more challenging to get lease financing in place, and that "customers have been keeping their equipment longer by extending the lease at reduced amounts and making the asset work harder."

To benefit from the best leasing opportunities, Read says: "Operators need to be aware of how important a clean credit rating is when it comes to securing lease finance. They must run their business bank account sensibly and avoid 'unpaid' items."

For operators on a sound financial footing, preserving cashflow and competitiveness in a difficult climate are powerful arguments for leasing.



**guy brown**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com



PARIS PORTE DE VERSAILLES  
13.14.15 Sept 2009

## EUROPEAN SPA EXHIBITION & SUMMIT

The Spa  
event  
professionals have been  
waiting for!

CREATED BY SPA PROFESSIONALS  
AND SPECIALISTS, THIS ONE-OF-A-KIND  
EVENT IN EUROPE, TAKING PLACE  
IN PARIS FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR,  
WILL ATTRACT ALL THE KEY PLACE-SETTING  
PLAYERS IN THE WORLD OF SPAS  
AND WELL-BEING.

EUROPEAN  
SPA

BEYOND  
BEAUTY  
PARIS

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

EMAIL: [europenspa@beyondbeautyparis.com](mailto:europenspa@beyondbeautyparis.com)

TEL: +33 (0)1 44 69 95 69

EUROPEAN  
SPASUMMIT

13-14 SEPT. 2009

Starting, managing, developing  
& making a Spa profitable

Official Sponsors:

COSMETIQUE  
spa

emotion  
spa  
Magazine

proguidespa.com

QUALITYSPA

spa business

spa opportunities

THE CRYSTAL AWARD  
EUROPE



# RETENTION RETURNS

**W**ith the economic downturn forcing people to cut back on their spending, health clubs face a tough task to keep their customers coming back.

With this in mind, Mark Edmonds speaks to four retention software companies about the ways in which they can help clubs to retain members, thereby providing a significant return on clubs' investment in their software systems.

## PHIL HORTON, UK WELLNESS SYSTEM MANAGER, TECHNOGYM

**C**ontact Manager is an interaction management system that alerts clubs to individuals likely to drop out, and provides staff with a tool to interact with members in need of attention. It is an add-on to the Wellness System – an exercise management and motivational tool that tracks members' progress, gives workout guidance, measures and benchmarks fitness levels and helps members monitor their results.

Technogym offers three core pieces of software, enabling a scalable platform approach. Connectivity solutions start from £5,600, including software licences, SMS module and two days of REPS-accredited staff training.

It's difficult to indicate a specific time frame for return on investment, as this varies based on sites' individual goals and objectives. As an example, however, since Lifestyles Fitness Centres in Liverpool have been using Technogym's resources, the number of new joiners going on to attend in the first month has increased from 40 per cent in 2006 to 60 per cent by December 2008. West Lothian



**Secondary spend** The Wellness System can be used to up-sell personal training services and show clients their results

Leisure's Xcite centres, meanwhile, have seen a 16 per cent rise in member numbers and member visits over a 12-month period to January 2009.

However, management level buy-in, as well as a joined-up business approach,

are fundamental to ensuring that the Wellness System is maximised and the best possible results achieved. We work with a wide spectrum of clubs, and the best results are always linked to a clear and focused service plan.





## Full Commercial & Light Commercial Racks & Benches



## Pro Medial Dumbbell with Lifetime Warranty



## Olympic ISO Plates



## Huge Selection of York Signature Bars



## Handmade Oak Lifting Platforms



## Pro-Classic & Club Boxing Equipment



**CALL 01327 701852  
FOR YOUR FREE  
YORK STRENGTH  
BROCHURE**

**YORK  
FITNESS**  
commercial range

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

Visit us at:

York Way, Daventry, Northants NN11 4YB

## retention software

### JON NASTA, MANAGING DIRECTOR (UK), RETENTION MANAGEMENT

Over the last eight years, we've witnessed an average 6 per cent improvement to a club's retention rate when using our systems, which generate automated emails to all members offering motivational tips, and which pay special attention to low and non-users who are most in danger of cancelling. The member is consistently reminded that their club cares about them and is taking a proactive role in their success.

The Alaska Club's 13 centres in North America reported retention rates on average 11 per cent higher among members receiving the emails than those not receiving them during their initial 18 months of membership.

The average return on investment for a club of 1,000 members charging £30 a month is £18,000. Clubs can also add special messages in the automated member emails and are seeing great results with secondary spending as a result.

Retention Management offers three levels of service: core (clubs up to 600 members), standard (600-plus members) and multi-club. There is an implementation fee of £195 per site irrespective of the package. The core



### Connection Motivational emails create a bond between club and member

service then costs £95/month per site; standard is £195/month per site; and multi-club costs vary based on the size of the chain. All support is included.

Most clubs see the largest retention improvements during the first 12 months of the system being introduced, as it helps to get new members to use the club early and often; consistently reinforces, supports and encourages each member's usage of their club; and reacts quickly when a member's visiting frequency drops.

Clubs that do not achieve the average retention improvements fall into two camps – those that already have good systems focusing on retention, and those that are poorly run. We can make a good club better, but we cannot make a bad club good.

## Ensuring clubs put retention at the heart of their business is essential to help them deliver results

### GUY FOSTER, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & SALES MANAGER, CLUBWISE



**Best practice** The system enables managers to monitor staff activity

The Active CRM system is part of the ClubWise club management service and provides personalised communication via SMS text, email and letter. This enables clubs to keep in contact with their members at key points such as induction, birthdays, renewals, non-attendance and arrears of membership.

One of our clients is The Énergie Group, which uses ClubWise across its portfolio. Typically we expect clubs' monthly retention rates to improve by 0.5 per cent, with





**Staff performance**  
The right staff training can help increase revenue and profitability

#### ALISTER ROLLINS, CEO/MD, THE RETENTION PEOPLE

The Retention People offers solution packages consisting of software, consultancy and training, including TRP Identify, TRP Interact and TRP Targets.

Our software can identify members most at risk of cancelling, encouraging clubs to interact with those members, as well as measuring the impact of each interaction on member behaviour, allowing clubs to refine their systems and operations.

Packages range from £150 to £600 a month depending on the number of modules purchased and the level of additional coaching and support required. All ongoing costs, such as system support and staff training, are included in the monthly fee.

Average return on investment is around 300 per cent within the first 12 months. One example is The

Dome in Doncaster, where members impacted by the service stayed on average 9.6 months longer than those who weren't, equating to £86,000 per 1,000 members in the first 12 months of membership alone.

There are numerous factors that impact on investment return, but all of our high performing clubs have one thing in common: the CEO/MD drives the retention performance of the business. Ensuring customers put retention at the heart of their business is essential to help them deliver results. This is done through a range of management workshops and interaction training for front-line staff.

We run an independent return on investment study 12 months after implementation, although clients can expect to see a return much quicker. Making a real impact on retention, however, is about extending membership lifetime to create a more sustainable long-term revenue stream.

improvements taking place within six months of implementing the system. Depending on the size of the club, this can result in a sizeable improvement in revenue and profitability.

Costs for installation begin at £1,000, which includes a fully-managed service as well as all necessary system implementation, technical support and training. Ongoing costs will depend on the applications supported, but start at £150 per month.

ClubWise Active CRM not only provides a service to members, but also enables managers to measure and monitor staff performance on

completion of critical calls, ensuring best retention practice in a club. Health clubs that then work with the technology and strive for the highest levels of customer satisfaction are those that will see the greatest returns.

With correct staff training and a desire by club owners and managers to increase revenue and profitability by improving customer satisfaction – and hence retention – the use of ClubWise technology can provide a key tool in driving results.

 **mark edmonds**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

## The Key to Retention: Choose the Right Retention Programme

**We do for you** what you want to do but don't have the time or resources.



**RETENTION<sup>®</sup>**  
MANAGEMENT  
.COM

*There is a Difference !*

	Us	The Other Guys
Hundreds of satisfied clubs and millions of satisfied members	✓	
Easy to implement	✓	
Large up-front cost		X
High monthly service fee		X
Significant investment in new hardware		X
No changes to operating procedures	✓	
Low impact on staff time	✓	
No contract tie-ins	✓	
Automated new member integration programme	✓	
No added cost to market member services	✓	
Drive secondary spending	✓	
Promote referral sales	✓	
Prospect marketing functionality <i>New for 2009!</i>	✓	
High risk members automatically targeted	✓	
Support not dependent on the member entering the club	✓	

Our patent pending communication programme automatically supports each member based on their individual usage patterns.

And much, much more!

**Call for a Complimentary  
Retention Analysis Today**

**01527 870875**

UKSales@RetentionManagement.com



**RETENTION<sup>®</sup>**  
MANAGEMENT  
.COM



# uniforms & gymwear

fitness-kit.net  
PRODUCT  
FOCUS

Wherever you are in the world, find the right products and services 24/7 by logging on to Health Club Management's free search engine, [www.fitness-kit.net](http://www.fitness-kit.net)

If you're a supplier, sign up for your free listing now on [www.fitness-kit.net](http://www.fitness-kit.net)



## TRENDY & CORPORATE

Corporate Trends, supplier of corporate leisurewear, has launched its latest La Beeby collection, 'The New Way' (pictured).

The collection has been designed to bring corporate wear closer to high street fashion. Made with the wearer's comfort in mind, the range is claimed to reflect the ethos of "we care more".

Corporate Trends offers front-of-house formal wear, for reception staff and management, and leisurewear for health and fitness staff.

fitness-kit keywords: corporate trends

## EVERYONE ACTIVE GETS NEW UNIFORM

A new clothing concept for SLM's Everyone Active gyms has been created by Taylor Made Designs to coincide with the opening of five new centres in East Hertfordshire and a new centre in Lamas, Nottinghamshire.

Previously, staff were dressed in plain polo shirts and tracksuit bottoms, but the new style involves yellow 'cool tec' polo shirts with red shorts for the lifeguards, and a choice of red or yellow cool tec polo shirts with black combat trousers (pictured) for the rest of the leisure staff.

The cool tec polo shirts are made from a quick-dry moisture-wicking fabric and staff can choose from either male or female styles. They are available in a range of 16 patterns, two different collar styles, and a total of 18 different colours.



fitness-kit keywords: taylor made designs



## SIMON JERSEY ENCOURAGING UNIFORMITY

As the shift to a more fashion-conscious workforce continues, Simon Jersey offers companies the chance to co-ordinate staff across an entire health club.

Fashionable beauty and spa tunics come in a variety of styles, which can be utilised to create what is described as a striking and professional look for image-conscious therapists. The scheme can be carried through to gym staff with corresponding polo shirts, while managers can choose from an array of premium quality suiting. Simon Jersey's current range includes the colours of plum and teal to create a uniform look for all employees.

fitness-kit keywords: simon jersey

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

For more information, or to contact any of these companies, log on to [www.fitness-kit.net](http://www.fitness-kit.net) and type the company name under 'keyword search'



For more information, or to contact any of these companies, log on to [www.fitness-kit.net](http://www.fitness-kit.net) and type the company name under 'keyword search'



POWERED BY

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



## P81'S ONLINE SERVICE

Lancashire-based Rossendale Leisure Trust has partnered with Promotions81 to provide an online ordering procedure for managers at its six sites.

The online system means that Promotions81 will manufacture and hold stock for Rossendale in its central warehouse, with goods picked and sent to sites on an on-demand basis. Stock stored at the Promotions81 warehouse is delivered to the sites the next day.

The online ordering process is designed to let site managers get on with their work without having to worry about issues such as stock taking or theft.

The online ordering system is being used by a range of clients across the leisure sector, from David Lloyd Leisure and LA Fitness to a variety of leisure trusts and spa facilities.

fitness-kit keyword: **promotions81**



## WORKING UP A SWEAT

The Sweatx Training Vest, designed by former top 10 UK sprinter Chris Hamilton, has been made available to health club staff for the first time.

The patented, 100 per cent toxin-free, bio-degradable vest is also available for retail.

Designed to be worn beneath training clothing, the vest stimulates the body to sweat more. Wearers use more calories when exercising, which helps with weight loss.

Furthermore, although water loss is replenished by drinking, the sweating helps the body to detoxify, eliminating chemicals stored in the fat cells and theoretically making weight loss easier.

The vest is disposable; designed for use in a range of sporting activities, it is then meant to be thrown away after use.

fitness-kit keyword: **sweatx**



## SECOND THOOSA RANGE

Women's running wear label Thoosa has launched its second collection consisting of the Swift, City and Chill ranges for instructors who want to add a touch of glamour to the workplace.

Comprising last year's best-sellers in vibrant new colours, the tops and bottoms are flattering in shape and are made from light, breathable fabrics.

The Swift range offers the essential core items for any runner, with a long racer-back vest designed to fit over sports bras. Thoosa's City range is longer and looser, designed with ultimate comfort in mind, and includes best-sellers from the debut range including the City vest (pictured).

Finally, the Chill range is intended for the colder months of the year with its technically-advanced fabric made with bamboo charcoal. Items include the Chill hoody, which features mitten cuffs to keep wearers' hands warm – perfect for outdoor personal training sessions.

fitness-kit keyword: **thoosa**

## LESS BOUNCE, MORE ACTION

Lessbounce has added to its collection with the introduction of the Triumph Tri-Action High Action Sports Top. The high-impact, racer-back sports bra is available in either grey or white and uses glue technology, offering supportive moulded cups with a melded underbust band to provide smooth, secure comfort – ideal for instructors and personal trainers working all day on the gym floor.

The full-coverage bra's soft elastic base fabric is combined with stretch tulle – a net-like material containing silk and rayon – at the back. There are also overlays with an innovative honeycomb structure, which are strategically positioned at the front and underarms to enhance breathability, wick moisture and regulate odour.

fitness-kit keyword: **lessbounce**





# STEVE WRIGHT

Kath Hudson talks to the UK MD of SCIFIT about the company's medical heritage, pushing the boundaries of R&D and developing truly inclusive kit



## **Q When and by whom was SCIFIT® established?**

SCIFIT's parent company Sinties™ was formed in 1987 with its roots in the home medical market, selling its fitness and rehab kit for people with disabilities. The company entered the commercial fitness and rehabilitation market in 1993 and the SCIFIT® cardiovascular line was formed two years later.

## **Q What's SCIFIT's philosophy?**

Our philosophy is to meet the needs of a wide range of individuals. We aim to do this by providing excellent quality products, programmes and services in conjunction with innovative fitness technologies and programmes.

## **Q What's your USP?**

Accessibility. We ensure our products can be used by everyone: those who are deconditioned, overweight or recovering from injury, the ageing population, or elite athletes whether disabled or not. The PRO2®, for example, is three machines in one: you can use it as a total body ergometer, an upper body ergometer or a recumbent bike.

Our products are particularly suitable for special populations due to their accessibility, comfort, full adjustability, ease of use, low start speed and minimal increments of increase in resistance levels: we offer 200 levels of resistance. They also include motivational aspects – the Fit-Key™ (see p75) – and, with the

exception of the treadmill, are self-powered, which makes our products energy-efficient.

We believe that a large number of currently inactive individuals will become active if given the appropriate education, programmes and equipment. The ageing population and the high cost of treating illness are becoming a major motivating factor for the promotion of wellness.

## **Q What are your core products?**

These include SCIFIT's PRO Series, as well as our commercial line of bi-directional bikes, treadmills and elliptical walkers.

## **Q When did you join the company?**

I joined in 2006, when the UK subsidiary was formed to grow the international arm of the company within the UK and Europe. We run the UK and European operations; in the UK we sell direct and in Europe we use distributors. We've formed a close partnership with gym80 in Germany, for example.

## **Q How much autonomy does the UK office have?**

As a wholly-owned subsidiary of the parent company, they have overall control. However, once we've agreed budgets and targets at the beginning of the year, we can implement our own plans, ideas and partnerships in order to grow the business and achieve those targets.

## **Q Did the company modify its products for the commercial sector?**

It was more a case of adding to the range. The ergometer and upper body ergometers were the staple products, but we needed to exploit the key



**New trend** In the future Wright sees people using the Fit-Key to book equipment so they can train together



## WHO'S WHO?

**CEO:** Larry Born  
**President:** Denton Smith  
**Vice-president operations:** Randy Yost  
**Vice-president international sales:** Bo Young  
**Vice-president sales & marketing:** Ken Pearson  
**Vice-president sales (US domestic):** Corey Disler  
**UK/European managing director:** Steve Wright

features of our range and the innovative fitness programmes. We've also enhanced the look of the product over the years, and this continues to be an ongoing project for our R&D team.

### What are the innovative fitness programmes that you mention?

Fitness equipment incorporates four standard fitness programmes – manual, heart rate, hill and random. We've added two more to that list. The first is the constant work programme that works on wattage, allowing wattage output to be set at a certain level. If the user slows down, the machine will increase the resistance to keep them working at the wattage they've specified.

The second is iso-strength, a strength training programme within a cardio machine that works on an isokinetic basis – exercise with an accommodating resistance at a fixed speed. This is an excellent interval training tool combining strength and cardio, and is a safe and effective way to increase strength and stamina. Bi-directional resistance doubles the effectiveness of the exercise, allowing the individual to train longer and promote reciprocal muscle work, ensuring correct recovery periods.

We've linked all this in with our Fit-Key technology. In the UK, we use a key that can be pre-programmed as required by the customer. The keys can be used in all of our machines, linking a variety of programmes and machines together. This is great for group exercise, allowing a small number of people of varying abilities to work together over a set period of time. This will become USB technology later this year, enabling a far greater choice of programmes and updates.



All-inclusive SCIFIT has IFI Stage 2 accreditation and works alongside the IFI as an R&D associate

### Do you have plans to unveil any new products or developments this year?

We're developing protocols for our PRO2 All Body Exerciser for VO2 MAX testing, as well as introducing our USB Fit-Key technology. For the US domestic market, SCIFIT and Performance Health Systems launched the bioDensity™ isometric training system at IHRSA 2009, which signals the company's first venture into the strength market. It's aimed at isometric training – pushing and pulling a stationary object from different angles – and uses a computer to measure the progress. ▶

## SCIFIT BY NUMBERS

**Head office:** Tulsa, US  
**Year-on-year growth:** 20 per cent internationally  
**Number of offices:** Two (US and UK)  
**Number of employees:** 56  
**Countries to which the UK office distributes:** Germany, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Russia, the Netherlands and Norway



**Top choice** The REX recumbent treadmill, with its swivel seat, is popular in the medical/rehab sector and in residential homes



## Q What was SCIFIT's big break?

In the UK, it was achieving IFI accreditation – initially at Stage 1 and more recently at Stage 2. Now we work with the IFI as an R&D associate. This got our products out into the UK and enabled us to expand on the exercise protocols that have made SCIFIT a success in the US. We've recently been awarded Medical Certification on eight of our rotary products, which has enhanced our profile and product offering right across Europe and within medical facilities in the UK.

## Q What does it mean to be an R&D associate?

Along with other fitness companies, we attend meetings with the IFI two or three times a year and are involved at a very early stage in IFI developments, or redevelopments, of equipment standards. We're currently discussing the IFI Stage 3, which I think could be a reality by 2012. Audio output is a topic under discussion at the moment.

## Q What are your most popular products?

In the UK, the most popular products continue to be the Stage 2 IFI-accredited

PRO1 Upper Body Ergometer, PRO2 Total Body Ergometer and the ISO7000R Recumbent Bike. The PRO1 Sport is becoming popular among independents and sports clubs – boxing, for example – as a specific upper body exerciser, and the REX™ (recumbent elliptical) and Rehab Treadmill are popular in the medical/rehab sector and in residential villages/homes.

## Q Who are your customers?

Local authorities for the IFI products; medical and rehab facilities (Lincoln Hospital, Core Exercise Clinic in Enfield); sports performance centres such as those focusing on football, rugby and boxing; residential villages/homes (Hazel Court in Swansea); independent gyms that want to differentiate themselves; and the education sector (Arbour Vale School, and SEN School in Slough).

## Q How would you describe the market at the moment?

The market appears to be cautious, which is actually quite positive for niche suppliers like us. Operators are tending to be more thorough when researching what equipment best suits their facility and the populations they wish to attract. As suppliers, we need to react to this and ensure we're offering suitable and specific solutions that cater for the operators' needs and steer away from the 'one size fits all' principle.

## Q What trends do you predict for 2009?

Despite the understandably cautious approach, we believe that operators

will be looking for unique solutions that allow them to differentiate themselves from other clubs.

Daily activity monitoring will continue to grow as the convergence of fitness, medical and rehab continues, with the requirement for accurate recording. I also see a growth in the 'club within a club' principle where, using the Fit-Key as a model, people can book three to five pieces of equipment and train socially together.

## Q What are your plans for the next 12 months?

My aim is to continue to grow at our current rate within the UK by implementing new ideas and solutions through our existing product range. I also want to accelerate growth across mainland Europe, using Medical Certification as the launch pad.

## Q Where would you like the company to be in five years?

I'd like to be the leading supplier of specialist cardio equipment throughout the UK and Europe.

## Q What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

My old rugby coach said to me that achieving goals – winning – is much more fun than just taking part!

**kath hudson**  
healthclub@leisuremedia.com

## FAVOURITES

**Book:** *It's Not About the Bike* by Lance Armstrong, and *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson  
**Film:** *Pulp Fiction*  
**Music:** R&B  
**Place:** Cornwall  
**Food:** Cantonese  
**Season:** Spring  
**Leisure activity:** Rugby, golf, running and skiing



## show preview

## fibo 2009

Head to FIBO to get the latest updates on equipment and best practice for fitness and wellness, with a new focus on links with the medical profession

Up to 500 exhibitors from 40 countries are expected at this year's FIBO, as well as 50,000 visitors across the four days, according to show organisers Reed Exhibitions Germany. This will include 25,000 trade visitors and will be a new record for FIBO, which takes place in Essen, Germany, on 23–26 April.

## broad wellness offering

The show is divided into a number of different sections and will host new and established exhibitors offering a wide range of products and services, plus action programmes and stage shows. The event occupies 71,000sq m across 11 halls and will showcase a variety of equipment, including fitness and training, wellness and beauty, health promotion and medical fitness. Other areas will include sports nutrition, music and fashion, and training.

In addition to fitness, wellness and power sports, there will also be a focus on health equipment: from diagnostic and functional therapy methods right through to professional health consulting. In addition, the FIBOmed stand in Hall 7 will be an area dedicated to the communication between studio operators and the medical profession. Among those represented will be health insurance providers with special concepts for linking doctors and fitness studios; software providers creating synergies between medics and clubs; and manufacturers of training equipment with a special health focus. Information will also be available from eugn GmbH & Co KG, the European health network that's working to bring patients, doctors and health and fitness establishments together into a co-operative, preventative healthcare relationship.

Also new this year will be a co-operation between ISWA (International Spa and Wellness Association) and Klafs in Hall 2. This area will offer information



Get the latest on wellness and beauty by visiting FIBO's dedicated section

on spa developments, trends and product innovations, with Spa and Wellness Expert Days (23 and 24 April) that will look in-depth at these trends.

## competitions and activities

**FIBOevent** offers a multitude of join-in and stage programmes, from cycling to Les Mills to US fitness trend Zumba.

Meanwhile, **FIBO POWER**, taking place alongside FIBO, is the meeting place for the bodybuilding and weight training community in Europe, including the FIBO Strongman Classics and the FIBO Powerlifting Challenge.

**FIBO POWER** Masters Fight Night takes place for the first time on Saturday 25 April – a co-operative venture between FIBO POWER, Masters Gym Duisburg and IKBO (the International Kick Boxing Organisation). Tickets are available from [www.fibo-power.de](http://www.fibo-power.de) or [www.masters-gym.com](http://www.masters-gym.com)

Last but not least, the Innovation Award celebrates its 10th birthday this

year. Previous recipients include Power Plate (2002), Nautilus TreadClimber (2006) and Technogym's Cardio Wave (2007), with the prize awarded annually by FIBO, TÜV Rheinland Product Safety GmbH, and the magazine *Fit FOR FUN*.

## DETAILS

**Date** 23–26 April 2009  
(23–24 April trade only)

**Venue** Exhibition Centre Essen (west, south and east entrances),  
Norbertstraße, 45131 Essen, Germany

**Opening hours** 09:00 – 18:00

**Entrance fees** – trade visitors:

1-day ticket: €22

2-day ticket: €28

Group ticket: €14

**Contact** [www.fibo.de](http://www.fibo.de)





# health club management

## DIRECTORY

For just over £20 per issue you can access over 10,000 motivated leisure professionals committed to the industry

To book your space call the sales team on  
**Tel: +44 (0)1462 431385**

### architects/designers

**RICHARD HYWEL EVANS**  
ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN  
[WWW.RHE-UK.COM](http://WWW.RHE-UK.COM)

fitness, therapy & spa  
**zynk**  
interior design  
1 020 7467 7332 • [stevens@zynkdesign.co.uk](mailto:stevens@zynkdesign.co.uk)  
[zynkdesign.com](http://zynkdesign.com)

To book your  
advert call the sales  
team on  
**+44 (0)1462 431385**

### AV/sound

Headphones?  
...no problem!

Whatever you need...  
**think...** **p81**  
[www.promotions81.com](http://www.promotions81.com)  
tel: 01625 500000

**lightmasters uk ltd.**

Wireless Cinema  
Wireless Audio for Spin Classes  
Full PA & AV Systems  
LED & Fibre Optic Lighting Systems

**01480 407727**  
Finance Package Available  
[info@lightmasters.co.uk](mailto:info@lightmasters.co.uk) • [www.lightmasters.co.uk](http://www.lightmasters.co.uk)

**leisure  
sound solutions**

Complete audio visual systems  
for your business

For more information call **01829 733516**  
[www.leisuresoundsolutions.co.uk](http://www.leisuresoundsolutions.co.uk)  
[info@leisuresoundsolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@leisuresoundsolutions.co.uk)

### clothing & merchandise

The complete promotional merchandise service... **ACTIVATE**

tel: 020 8655 4222  
[www.activatepromotions.co.uk](http://www.activatepromotions.co.uk)  
email: [sales@activatepromotions.co.uk](mailto:sales@activatepromotions.co.uk)

FOR THE BEST STAFF UNIFORMS AND CORPORATE WEAR

Tel: 01142 513512 for more information  
[www.corporatetrends.co.uk](http://www.corporatetrends.co.uk)

Branded  
Clothing?  
...no problem!

Whatever you need...  
**think...** **p81**  
[www.promotions81.com](http://www.promotions81.com)  
tel: 01625 500000

**Clothing & Merchandise  
Solutions** call us today  
**0845 555 3311**  
[taylormadedesigns.co.uk](http://taylormadedesigns.co.uk)

### club operation support

Looking to open a fitness  
or wellness business?

Britain's leading  
fitness and  
wellness franchisor

**0845 363 1020**  
[www.energiegroup.co.uk](http://www.energiegroup.co.uk)

### club operation support cont.

**RCS**

**DO YOU HAVE UNPAID  
MEMBERSHIP FEES?**

Consult the Industry Specialists

**REVENUE COLLECTION  
SERVICES**

'Professional Experts' in the  
collection of irregular payments  
Proven success at over 75%

CONTACT US NOW TO DISCUSS  
OUR 'FREE SERVICE'

e-mail: [info@rcs.uk.net](mailto:info@rcs.uk.net)  
Tel: Stuart Robinson 01932 753219

### computer membership software

**.ez  
systems.**  
INTELLIGENT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

**maximise your  
yield and retain  
more members**

- 'Intelligent' membership
- 'Intelligent' spa
- Online prospecting
- Online bookings with SMS  
and email confirmation
- Online CRM

**make life  
.ez**

T. + 44 (0) 207 449 4999  
E. [info@ezsystems.co.uk](mailto:info@ezsystems.co.uk)  
[www.ezsystems.co.uk](http://www.ezsystems.co.uk)

**brightlime**  
Web and mobile membership management

Outsmart the competition.

- With powerful browser-based web software
- Offline smart card backup protection

"Brightlime delivers fantastic software with the economic benefits of the web and 24/7 support. It ticks all the boxes for our club."

Preparation • Membership • Access Control •  
Renewals • Expiry • F.I.P.O. • Stock Control • Back Office  
Processing • Reporting • Management Reporting

E. [info@brightlime.co.uk](mailto:info@brightlime.co.uk) | [www.brightlime.co.uk](http://www.brightlime.co.uk)  
**T 0844 800 8350**



## computer membership software cont.

**Legend**  
Club Management Systems  
THE DEFINITIVE SOLUTION

- The definitive set of club management software modules
- Fully integrated CRM
- Tried and tested solutions
- No upfront investment

**0800 389 2069**  
[www.legendware.co.uk](http://www.legendware.co.uk)

**SPORTSOFT**

- Membership/CRM
- Text Messaging
- TID & eMail
- Access & Badge Cards
- Spa Management
- Sport & Guest Booking
- Badge & Fingerprint
- Classes Management
- Monthly Payments
- Centralised Multi-Site
- Subcontract Systems

**T: 01423 979873**  
**W: [www.sportsoft.co.uk](http://www.sportsoft.co.uk)**

**See more of your members**

Sales Prospecting • Bookings  
Member management • CRM  
Access Control • Retention  
BACSTEL-IP Billing

**sda solutions**

**sdasolutions.com**  
**+44 (0)870 607 1966**

**ClubRunner**

...software that puts you in control

Cost effective, simple and stress free solutions for Prospecting, EPOS Reporting, CRM Membership Security Bookings Billing

**T: 0844 8475827** [www.clubrunner.co.uk](http://www.clubrunner.co.uk)  
**E: [sales@clubrunner.co.uk](mailto:sales@clubrunner.co.uk)**

**xn LEISURE**

for all your leisure management IT needs

**www.xnleisure.com**  
**+44 (0)870 80 30 700**

## CheckFree Compete

### Membership Management Software

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

**LeisureMOST**  
Software for the Leisure Industry

Membership	Bookings
Visit Recording	Point of Sale
Card Production	Back Office
Image Capture	Courses
Access Control	Web Bookings
Text Messaging	Single/Multi Site

**0113 2370688**  
[www.leisuremost.com](http://www.leisuremost.com)

## computer software

**SOFTWARE SPECIALISTS FOR THE HEALTH AND FITNESS INDUSTRY**

Website design • E-commerce solutions • CRM systems  
Desktop software • Business solutions • Bespoke solutions

[www.optimumfitness.biz](http://www.optimumfitness.biz)  
[info@optimumfitness.biz](mailto:info@optimumfitness.biz)  
**01634 883 444**

**optimumfitness**

## direct debit collection

**belmont leisure solutions**

Membership Fee Collection  
Facility Management Software  
Marketing Sales and Retention  
Direct Debit Collection  
Flexible Credit Control  
Fraud Debt Collection  
Call Centre Facility

**No 1 IN FLEXIBLE MEMBERSHIP COLLECTIONS**

**Email: [dhoward@belmont-finance.co.uk](mailto:dhoward@belmont-finance.co.uk)**  
**[www.belmontleisurecollections.co.uk](http://www.belmontleisurecollections.co.uk)**  
**Tel: +44 (0) 1932 753213**

**Flexible Direct Debit Solutions**

- Professional collection on contracted or non contracted memberships
- High Collection Rates
- BACS BUREAU for existing Originators
- Online Direct Debit with our SNAP sales portal
- Development Loans
- We can ALSO collect your debts FREE OF CHARGE?

**T: 0845 230 1636** [esales@harlandsgroup.co.uk](mailto:esales@harlandsgroup.co.uk)  
**[www.harlandsgroup.co.uk](http://www.harlandsgroup.co.uk)**

To book your advert call the sales team on  
**+44 (0)1462 431385**

## direct debit collection cont.

**Direct Debit Solutions**

**Tailor Made for YOU**

Bespoke Direct Debit Solutions from **Debit Finance Collections**

**E: [sales@debitfinance.co.uk](mailto:sales@debitfinance.co.uk)**  
**W: [www.debitfinance.co.uk](http://www.debitfinance.co.uk)**

**FASTDD** ON LINE DIRECT DEBIT **dfc** Debit Finance Collections Ltd  
Part of The Leisure Finance Group

## exercise equipment

free weights, flooring & studio equipment

**Jordan**

Tel: +44 (0) 1945 880257  
[www.jordanfitness.co.uk](http://www.jordanfitness.co.uk)

Studio Pilates • Personal Training • Group Fitness • Bootcamp • CrossFit • Yoga • Pilates • Zumba • Aerobic • Cardio • Strength Training • Functional Training • Circuit Training • HIIT • P90X • P90X2 • P90X3 • P90X4 • P90X5 • P90X6 • P90X7 • P90X8 • P90X9 • P90X10 • P90X11 • P90X12 • P90X13 • P90X14 • P90X15 • P90X16 • P90X17 • P90X18 • P90X19 • P90X20 • P90X21 • P90X22 • P90X23 • P90X24 • P90X25 • P90X26 • P90X27 • P90X28 • P90X29 • P90X30 • P90X31 • P90X32 • P90X33 • P90X34 • P90X35 • P90X36 • P90X37 • P90X38 • P90X39 • P90X40 • P90X41 • P90X42 • P90X43 • P90X44 • P90X45 • P90X46 • P90X47 • P90X48 • P90X49 • P90X50 • P90X51 • P90X52 • P90X53 • P90X54 • P90X55 • P90X56 • P90X57 • P90X58 • P90X59 • P90X60 • P90X61 • P90X62 • P90X63 • P90X64 • P90X65 • P90X66 • P90X67 • P90X68 • P90X69 • P90X70 • P90X71 • P90X72 • P90X73 • P90X74 • P90X75 • P90X76 • P90X77 • P90X78 • P90X79 • P90X80 • P90X81 • P90X82 • P90X83 • P90X84 • P90X85 • P90X86 • P90X87 • P90X88 • P90X89 • P90X90 • P90X91 • P90X92 • P90X93 • P90X94 • P90X95 • P90X96 • P90X97 • P90X98 • P90X99 • P90X100

**0800 7834506**  
**www.jordanfitness.co.uk**

**ST Fitness Equ**

**SALES AND SERVICE**  
NEW RECONDITIONED RESISTANCE, CARPO  
MUSCULAR AND FREE WEIGHTS EQUIPMENT.

**TEL: 01204 666887**  
**WWW.STFITNESS.COM**

**STOTT PILATES®** has earned an international reputation as the world's most respected Pilates brand.

Distributed in the UK by Pilates Solutions, we can work with you on space planning, sourcing instructors or training existing staff, marketing and finance options to create a profitable Pilates studio for your facility.

**0800 434 6110**  
[www.pilatesolutions.co.uk](http://www.pilatesolutions.co.uk)  
UK Distributor of STOTT PILATES® Equipment

**IRON GRIP**  
BARBELL COMPANY

LARGEST PRODUCER OF COMMERCIAL FREEWEIGHTS WORLDWIDE

PREMIUM OLYMPIC PLATES, BARS AND DUMBBELLS  
5 YEAR WARRANTY

For a list of Distributors in the UK, visit [www.stronggrip.com](http://www.stronggrip.com)

**NAUTILUS**

Cardio Resistance Free Weights Studio Cycling Education

**Why Nautilus?**  
35 years ago, Nautilus practically invented fitness equipment. We've been reinventing it ever since.

**NAUTILUS**  
"Stronger the game in health and fitness"

For further information contact Nautilus on  
**01908 267 345** or [enquiries@nautilus.com](mailto:enquiries@nautilus.com)  
[www.nautilus.com](http://www.nautilus.com)

**pilates solutions**

**0800 434 6110**  
[www.pilatesolutions.co.uk](http://www.pilatesolutions.co.uk)



## exercise equipment cont.

FUNCTIONAL, RESULTS DRIVEN,  
INNOVATIVE EQUIPMENT FOR  
FITNESS, SPORTS & REHABILITATION

**Physical**  
COMPANY



Call us for your free 2009 / 2010 catalogue  
Phone: 01494 769 222 [www.physicalcompany.co.uk](http://www.physicalcompany.co.uk)

### FITNESS SYSTEMS

Fitness Systems are one of the UK's fastest growing suppliers of Total Gym Solutions. Everything you need to create, manage and maintain your gym from initial design through to full installation all from one single supplier.

### Fitness by Design

For further information  
contact Fitness Systems on  
01204 541710

### Cardiovascular Strength Free Weights Ancillaries

- Force branded strength products
- SK Line TV Cardiovascular Products
- Free gym layouts
- Plate loaded equipment and free weights
- Leading brands reconditioned CV and strength equipment
- Flexible equipment finance



**GRAVITY**  
BODY FITNESS • PLATE • PUMP • TONING • THERAPY

Four great  
programmes, one  
award-winning piece  
of equipment.

[www.gravityuk.net](http://www.gravityuk.net)

For more information call 0845 602 7485 or email [admin@gravityuk.net](mailto:admin@gravityuk.net)



To book your advert  
call the sales team on

**+44 (0)1462 431385**

## flooring

flooring solutions for  
the fitness industry



Tel: +44 (0)1945 880257  
[www.easylockflooring.co.uk](http://www.easylockflooring.co.uk)

## hairdryers

**Wyvern Inn Leisure Ltd**

HAIRDRYERS, CON-OP OR PUSHBUTTON

- Traditional handsets with a choice of 600W or 1200W
- New hot air tube "Jumbo" 600W
- Enhances changing room facilities
- CE marked

Tel: 01258 455383  
Fax: 01258 458418  
Email: [sales@wyvern-innleisure.co.uk](mailto:sales@wyvern-innleisure.co.uk)

[www.wyvern-innleisure.co.uk](http://www.wyvern-innleisure.co.uk)

To book your advert  
call the sales team on  
**+44 (0)1462 431385**

## insurance

Bespoke Insurance Solutions

**fml**

### GYM INSURANCE

Individual Approach  
Individual Advice  
Individual Premiums

Tel: 01702 437800  
Fax: 01702 437888

Email: [tonfrisky@fmlinsurance.com](mailto:tonfrisky@fmlinsurance.com)  
Web: [www.fmlinsurance.com](http://www.fmlinsurance.com)

Health and Fitness Clubs,  
Gyms & Leisure Centres...  
Use the Market Leader

THE Fitness Industry  
Combined Insurance Scheme



Overseas House,  
19-21 Ironmonger Row,  
London EC4V 3JN

Tel: 020 7201 6821 Email: [enquiries@ansell.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ansell.co.uk)  
Web: [www.ansell.co.uk](http://www.ansell.co.uk)

## lighting

**lightmasters uk ltd.**

Wireless Cardio Cinema  
Wireless Audio for Spin Classes  
Full PA & AV Systems  
LED & Fibre Optic Lighting Systems

**01480 407727**

Finance Package Available

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

To book your  
advert call the sales  
team on  
**+44 (0)1462 431385**

## lockers/changing rooms



Padlocks?  
...no problem

Whatever you need...  
**think...**

[www.promotions81.com](http://www.promotions81.com) Tel: 01625 500000

**Crown Sports Interiors**  
...for a finer finish

- Leisure centres
- Golf clubs
- Health clubs
- Hotels



CROWN SPORTS LOCKERS (UK) LTD  
Unit 2-3 Torrey Business Park,  
Widewater Road, Farnham,  
Dorset, UK, GU10 2JH  
Tel: 01250 820000  
Fax: 01250 820001  
e: [sales@crownsportslockers.co.uk](mailto:sales@crownsportslockers.co.uk)

**CROWN**  
**SPORTS**  
LOCKERS

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



## lockers/changing rooms cont.

Lockers - Locking Systems - Cabinets - Washrooms

**SAFE SPACE**

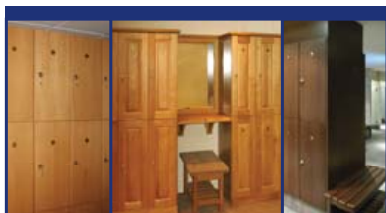


Safe Space Lockers Ltd  
Moorpark Business Centre,  
Suite 2, Penta Court,  
Station Road, Borehamwood,  
Hertfordshire WD6 1SL  
T: 0870 990 7989  
F: 0871 431 0430  
E: [info@safe-space-lockers.co.uk](mailto:info@safe-space-lockers.co.uk)

Please call **0870 990 7989** for more details



## lockers/changing rooms cont.



# FITLOCKERS

Quality Affordable  
Timber Lockers

T: 01923 770435 sales@fitlockers.co.uk www.fitlockers.co.uk

## sales & marketing

www.creativefitness.net

**Need to increase your memberships?**

**We can H.E.L.P!**

**CALL: 0870-270-6667**

The Worldwide Leader in Health Club Promotions

# CREATIVE FITNESS MARKETING

IFCA INHSA

## spas saunas sunbeds

**Viking Saunas and Steam Rooms**

Specialists in new build, replacements & refurbishment.

**tel: 01257 427019**

www.viking-saunas.co.uk

**HELO**

The world's largest sauna & steam company

saunas steam rooms  
facility design

011525 902080 • sales@helo.co.uk • www.helo.co.uk

## sports towels

Branded Towels...no problem

Whatever you need...  
**think... p81**

www.promotions81.com  
tel: 011525 500000

## To book your advert call

Tessa +44 (0)1462 471903  
John +44 (0)1582 607970  
Nadeem +44 (0)1462 471902  
Julie +44 (0)1462 471919  
Jan +44 (0)1462 471909

## vending

**STOCKING UP**

**THE VENDING MACHINE COMPANY**

Stocking Up provides the UK's health clubs with quality branded products for members and staff from our range of vending machines...

- Tights
- Feminine Hygiene
- Pain Relief
- Dental and Shaving Packs

For our brochures and further information please contact us at Stocking Up Limited:

tel: 0870 850 6264 Fax 0870 850 4120  
Email: sales@stockingup.co.uk  
www.stockingup.co.uk

## COPYRIGHT NOTICE

To subscribe to Health Club Management, log on to [www.leisuresubs.com](http://www.leisuresubs.com), email: [subs@leisuremedia.com](mailto:subs@leisuremedia.com), tel: +44 (0)1462 471915, fax: +44 (0)1462 433909. Annual subscription rates: UK £41, Europe £52, rest of world £72.50 and students UK £20.

Health Club Management is published 11 times a year by The Leisure Media Company Limited, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1DJ, UK, and is distributed in the USA by SPP, 75 Aberdeen Road, Emigsville, PA 17318-0437. Periodicals postage paid @ Manchester, PA. POSTMASTER Send US address changes to Health Club Management, c/o PO Box 437, Emigsville, PA 17318-0437.

The views expressed in print are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher The Leisure Media Company Limited. 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. Printed by Warners Midland.

© Cybertek Ltd 2009 ISSN 1361/351

**Book your advert on our website and be seen by over 15,000 buyers every month from as little as £250.**



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

# 01462 431385

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



# R.E.D.

## REFURBISHED | EQUIPMENT | DIRECTORY

Sell you refurbished equipment fast by advertising your refurbished kit in the new directory. Book your space now by calling the display sales team on **01462 431385**, or e-mail your request to [displaysales@leisuremedia.com](mailto:displaysales@leisuremedia.com)



life fitness • precor • cybers • stairmaster

**PEAKBODY**  
FITNESS EQUIPMENT LTD

- Fully Remanufactured Fitness Equipment
- Genuine Parts
- One Years Parts & Labour Warranty

**We Guarantee To Beat Any Other Genuine Quote**

Tel: 0191 417 1055    [www.peakbodyfitness.co.uk](http://www.peakbodyfitness.co.uk)



**5 Reasons to buy from Amazon Leisure (UK) Ltd**



- 1) UK's largest supplier of refurbished gym equipment
- 2) Refurbishment levels to suit all budgets
- 3) Extensive warranties & service contracts available
- 4) UK's leading installers of commercial gym equipment
- 5) Over 18 years of trading

**Call us now**

**Tel: 01953 498098**

**Web: [www.amazon-leisure.co.uk](http://www.amazon-leisure.co.uk)**

**Email: [sales@amazon-leisure.co.uk](mailto:sales@amazon-leisure.co.uk)**





**Reconditioned sunbeds**

- Flexible leasing options
- Fully factory reconditioned.
- Ergoline specialists.
- Service/repairs to all makes.



Sunbed & Leisure Systems (UK) Ltd, Unit 8, Network Centre,  
Midland Way, Barlborough, Chesterfield, S43 4WW  
[www.sunbedandleisure.co.uk](http://www.sunbedandleisure.co.uk)    Tel 0845 241 4555

**servicesport**

Service and sales of equipment

- Fitness Equipment Servicing
- Sportshall Servicing
- Equipment Sales
- Parts Sales



**Call: 0845 402 2456**    [www.servicesport.co.uk](http://www.servicesport.co.uk)

Sell you refurbished equipment fast by advertising your refurbished kit in the new directory.

Book your space now by calling the display sales team on  
**01462 431385**,  
or e-mail your request to [displaysales@leisuremedia.com](mailto:displaysales@leisuremedia.com)



# lightweights

## CHAMPIONING CROSS-COUNTRY FOR CANINES

It's a well-known fact that dog owners are likely to be fit: in fact, 92 per cent of them are likely to stick to an exercise routine over the years compared to only 52 per cent of gym members (see HCM July 07, p88).

For those who want to take their dog-walking up a gear, however, there's Cani-Cross (or CaniX) – a cross-country event where runners race with their pooches.

Staged across the UK, the CaniX race season runs from 31 May to 1 September. Distances vary from 2.5km for junior classes to up to 21km for adults. Dogs must be at least one year old to enter the shortest distances, while those over two years old can take part in all challenges.

CaniX advises owners to build up their dogs' distance over several weeks or even months. For the owner, it's said that running with a dog can improve your pace and build a bond with your pet.



## WAITER, WAITER, THERE'S A SPY IN MY SOUP

Watch what you eat? Well, what about being watched while you eat?

Diners at the Restaurant of the Future at Wageningen University, Holland, are filmed as part of an experiment to analyse the subconscious decisions we make about food. The Big Brother-style eatery has 27 hidden cameras, which scientists use to observe eating patterns, while a secret scale measures BMI and weight as people queue to pay.

The site is changed each week to see how different surroundings affect our appetites. The findings could lead to restaurants being re-designed to motivate us to eat more healthily.



## A SHOE THAT'S FIT FOR RETAIL IN CLUBS

With the summer approaching, club and centre operators may want to think of stocking up their retail area with FitFlops – flip flops that are designed to help tone and trim the legs.

The shoes feature a tapered midsole, the thickness of which varies in order to destabilise the foot slightly, creating tension in the supporting muscles of the foot and leg. This process is said to engage the slow twitch muscles for longer, therefore making them work harder.

FitFlops are claimed to improve core muscle strength, encourage better posture and stronger muscles and burn calories.

PICTURES (LEFT AND TOP): WWW.ISTOCK.COM

## NEW DEALS TAKE THE BISCUIT

If you want to land yourself that lucrative new lease or site acquisition, the solution is simple: buy good biscuits!

A survey has shown that four out of five UK companies are convinced that the type of biscuit dished up to potential clients is key to getting them to sign the deal – or seeing it crumble.

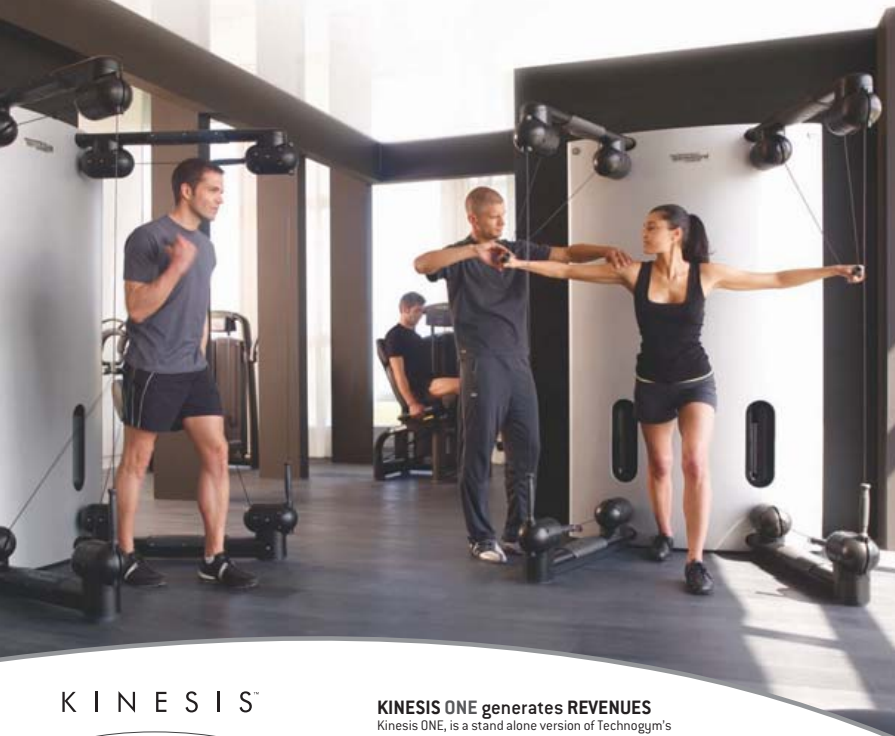
According to the 1,000 business professionals questioned by Holiday Inn, it's all about range and quality. If

you want to make the best impression, opt for a chocolate digestive – although shortbread or Hob Nobs may also suffice. Jammie Dodgers and Bourbons are advised if you want to sweeten clients up, but crumbly types, such as regular digestives, are a big no-no.

Apparently, the most acceptable number of biscuits to take from a communal plate is two, while dunking is completely frowned upon.



# Makes perfect business sense.



## KINESIS™

O N E



### **KINESIS ONE generates REVENUES**

Kinesis ONE, is a stand alone version of Technogym's highly innovative Kinesis technology. Designed to provide a gym floor solution to engage members & generate Personal Training Revenue.

Kinesis ONE : Maximise your investment through income generation with Kinesis:

- Business Models**
- Member Programmes**
- PT Education**
- Marketing Support**
- Layout & design**
- Accessories**

Learn more about the Kinesis family and discover the benefits awaiting you if you choose Kinesis ONE for business at [www.technogym.com/kinesisone](http://www.technogym.com/kinesisone)  
UK [info@technogym.com](mailto:info@technogym.com) or call 01344 300236

**TECHNOGYM**  
The Wellness Company™