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SEPTEMBER 2013 No 206



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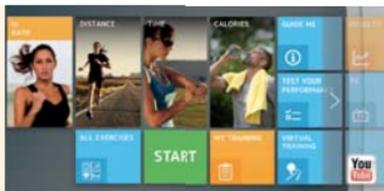
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United Kingdom - TECHNOGYM UK Ltd. - Ph +44 1344 300236 - Fax +44 1344 300238 - E-mail: UKinfo@technogym.com
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ATTENTION RETENTION

Worrying figures from new industry research

POP-UPS

The rise and rise of the temporary leisure venue

ON THE COVER

JON WRIGHT

The MD of Xercise4Less on a new partnership with Tesco

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EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT...

MAINTAINING MOTIVATION

ARE CLUBS' ACTIONS CAUSING MEMBERS TO BREAK GOOD HABITS?



It's arrived.

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Subscriptions

Denise Adams
+44 (0) 1462 471930

Circulation manager

Michael Emmerson
+44 (0) 1462 471932

Editor

Kate Cracknell
+44 (0) 1462 471906

Editorial director

Liz Terry
+44 (0) 1462 431385

Assistant editor

Katie Barnes
+44 (0) 1462 471925

News editor

Tom Walker
+44 (0) 1462 471934

News desk

Aoife Dowling
+44 (0) 1462 471938

Product editor

Kate Corney
+44 (0) 1462 471927

Designer

Clara Nicoll
+44 (0) 1767 769645

Web team

Dean Fox
+44 (0) 1462 471900

Emma Harris
+44 (0) 1462 471921

Tim Nash
+44 (0) 1462 471917

Michael Paramore
+44 (0) 1462 471926

Publisher

Jan Williams
+44 (0) 1462 471909

Sales

John Challinor
+44 (0) 1202 742968

Astrid Ros
+44 (0) 1462 471911

Julie Badrick
+44 (0) 1462 471919

Financial administrator

Denise Gildea
+44 (0) 1462 471930

Credit controller

Rebekah Scott
+44 (0) 1462 733477

We can improve retention



Retention levels in the fitness industry have fallen to a record low of 52 per cent, according to a new study by Dr Paul Bedford (see p62). It's time for operators to act to reverse this decline.

Keeping an engaged and loyal membership base is key to the health club business model – whether tied in with a contract or not – and everything must be done to ensure retention is strong and stable.

Bedford analysed nearly 350,000 member records covering the four-year period 2009-12 and his results show, in part, the impact the recession has had on the industry, as household budgets were squeezed.

There were other factors at work too, with some – such as new regulation

Clubs must become more surgical in their analysis of why each member is leaving – and then use this data to re-engage them where possible

governing the length of gym contracts – out of clubs' control. However, much remains in the hands of operators, and now the economy is showing clear signs of recovery, it's time for the industry to act.

New research from Australia and New Zealand found that 60 per cent of members and ex-members believe regular interaction with gym staff is important (see page 20). Assuming these findings are transferable to other markets, figuring out which members this applies to and ensuring they get regular interaction could be the difference between them staying and leaving.

Kate Cracknell, editor - katecracknell@leisuremedia.com / twitter: @HealthClubKate
To share your thoughts on this topic, visit www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/blog

But it also suggests the time has come to revisit the 'one size fits all' approach that sees interaction as the panacea to cure all retention ills: if you're only talking to the 40 per cent who don't care, you're not only wasting your time, but you're also failing to engage with those to whom it does matter.

And just talking to members isn't enough; we have to listen too. People leave gyms for many reasons, none of which are reflected in 'big data': while quantitative surveys give an interesting overview of sector performance over time, they don't offer actionable insights into individual motivations that will lead to significant change at a club level.

'Small data' is also needed: clubs must become much more surgical in their analysis of why each member is leaving, then use this knowledge to re-engage them where possible.

Some lapsing is out of clubs' control, such as people who leave due to an illness. This group should be wished well and leave with a warm feeling about the gym. However, those who leave but could potentially return should have the door left wide open – people moving house who could be encouraged to join another gym in the chain, for example, or those whose financial circumstances have temporarily changed, for whom a 'come back when you're ready' offer might work well.

Lapsers whose issues relate to the gym itself, rather than external factors, represent an opportunity on two fronts: firstly, talking to them will highlight operational glitches that could potentially alienate others, and secondly, they could be won back if their concerns are addressed.

Gyms should take the time to connect with resigning members at this 'small data' level, as this is one of the keys to driving better retention. If we're honest, how many times do we say: 'We'd really like you to stay. What would it take to make that happen?'

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The Leisure Media Company Ltd, Portmill House,
Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1DJ UK

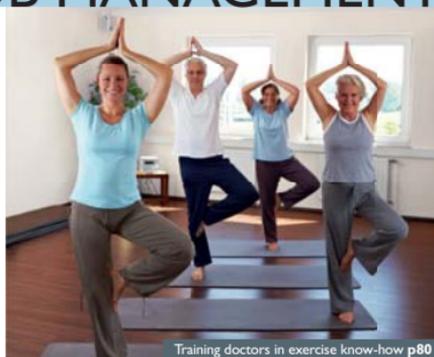


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Buyers' guide:

For suppliers of products and services in the health club and spa markets, turn to p136



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



Retention may be improved by adding more of your gym's most popular kit

Retention isn't only about staff-member interaction

I'm writing regarding your recent three-part retention series (see *HCM* May, June and July 13). It's not that I disagree with Guy Griffiths: I'm sure operators would improve retention if his advice were followed. However, what I take issue with is the one-dimensional aspect of every retention discussion that takes place in the fitness sector. It seems the industry views retention as a simple equation of 'retention = staff engagement with customers'.

The discussion must be expanded, recognising other aspects of the customer experience that affect retention.

We've been measuring the 'availability' of gym equipment for two and a half years now, and have seen that when a gym is at full capacity and customers can no longer easily get on equipment, the membership base stops growing. As fast as the sales team sells memberships, existing customers leave. When gyms

solve equipment bottlenecks in specific areas, removing kit that's not being used and adding more of the popular stations, membership grows. In one site that had an overall capacity shortage and expanded the whole gym, direct debits increased by £420k p.a.

Simply put, customers stop coming to gyms when they can't get on the kit they want, when they want, and this has a massive impact on retention.

But what of the retention impact of improving the aircon system, changing rooms, AV entertainment, cleanliness...? These aspects, and many others, will have an impact. To move beyond the 12 per cent penetration rate, I believe the industry needs to research the impact of other value drivers on retention, and not only focus on customer engagement.

Rory McGown
 Founder, *GYMetric*

New study will link retention with member characteristics

I agree with the editor that using crude member groupings to inform engagement strategies can lead to discord between member and club (see *HCM* July 13, p5). Unfortunately the majority of clubs, and the industry as a whole, only have limited information on which to base any groupings.

The Retention People's TRP 10,000[®] study, which I am leading, aims to do exactly what the editor proposes. The study will survey and follow 10,000 club members and investigate the interaction between member characteristics, motivations, values, club activities and retention. One of the key outcomes of the research will be to understand what kinds of members, with what motivations, engage in particular club activities at various frequencies during different periods of their membership.

In addition, we will be examining the value members place on different communication channels, from reception and fitness staff to SMS, email and social media. The first results from the study will appear towards the end of the year.

Dr Melvyn Hillsdon
 Physical activity researcher



The retention study will follow and survey 10,000 club members

THE FUTURE OF FITNESS IS TECHNOLOGY



Technology puts members in control of their workout

A major installation of Life Fitness technology has helped grow membership at Fitness First in South Kensington by 27 per cent

Earlier this year Fitness First, one of the UK's largest health club groups, embarked on a project to take fitness technology to another level to enhance the gym experience and attract new members.

Technology in gyms and health clubs is ever more in demand, with a recent study* highlighting that nearly three-quarters of exercisers use a tech-based device during their workout and more than half consider themselves to be more successful at achieving their fitness goals because of it. More notably, a third of exercisers would be willing to switch gyms to access better technology.

Fitness First's 'Workout of the Future' initiative saw the complete

refurbishment of its South Kensington club, including the installation of interactive personal trainer screens, innovative cool-down air showers and a cardio wall. As part of this upgrade, Fitness First wanted to give members the very latest, advanced CV equipment that would put them in complete control of their workout. So it turned to global leaders in the field, Life Fitness.

At South Kensington, members can now benefit from the latest Life Fitness cardiovascular treadmill which features the new Discover™ Tablet Console. This high tech equipment has Discover's Swipe™ technology and enables users to select interactive Lifescape™ courses whereby they virtually run through

"Having advanced equipment along with highly qualified fitness staff is a great mix and gives more to our members. Our fitness offering is diverse and means our members can challenge themselves in varied ways, with really innovative and unique equipment."

LEE MATTHEWS, UK Head of Fitness at Fitness First

famous routes in locations all over the world. From California to Africa, Lifescape will match the scenery, incline, resistance and terrain to its location.

Since the refurbishment, membership at the South Kensington club is up 27%. Fitness First are planning further site transformations following this success.

* LIFE FITNESS 2012 STUDY OF 745 EXERCISERS ACROSS SEVEN COUNTRIES



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Impact of exercise on dementia to be studied

Health researchers have been granted £124m funding to help challenge major health issues, including work on how to reduce the risk of dementia through exercise. The funds have been provided by the Department of Health and will look to impact the development of innovative treatments and techniques to improve healthcare. It's also hoped the investment will stimulate the health research economy and attract future funding. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=A3n3l>



Defibrillators are saving lives at health clubs

Cardiac arrest survival odds better at fitness clubs

Sufferers of cardiac arrests at traditional fitness facilities have a higher chance of survival than at other indoor locations, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. It's thought the findings are in part down to earlier access to CPR equipment and automated external defibrillators (AEDs). The study observed the frequency, treatment and outcomes of sudden cardiac arrests at both traditional and alternative exercise facilities.

Sefton Council launches its 37th outdoor gym

As part of an ongoing project to create outdoor gyms across the borough of Sefton, the council recently launched site number 37.

The outdoor gyms, manufactured by Calo, are free to use and aim to encourage residents to use outdoor spaces, in addition to improving their health, wellbeing and levels of physical activity. Many of the gyms are linked to the council's 'Active Sefton' programmes, which include walking and cycling initiatives. The scheme began in 2009, with a total investment of £400k.

Obesity tackled using psychology

Independent mental health hospital Capio Nightingale in London has launched a dedicated weight management and obesity service. The psychological treatment programme will aim to offer a non-surgical, sustainable treatment to address the root causes of overeating.

It will be aimed at obese people as well as individuals who are classed as 'pre-obese' – those who need to change their lifestyle in order to maintain their long-term health. The service is also being offered to those who've tried and repeatedly failed to achieve or maintain weight loss, and those who have emotional issues with food. It includes a free initial consultation.

Dr Bijal Chheda-Varma, joint-lead of the Capio Nightingale Hospital obesity therapy team, says the incidence of overweight patient numbers is soaring in the UK, adding: "By carefully tailoring our programme to the individual needs of the patient, we can address the underlying psychological triggers for overeating." Details: <http://lei.sr?a=f71zj>



Capio Nightingale: Free consultations for overweight people who might benefit from its new programme

Total Fitness' results back on track

Total Fitness has filed its consolidated group accounts for 2012, which show an improvement on 2011, with the company's EBITDA increasing to £2.6m on £29.7m sales. Half-year trading results to 30 June 2013 also

show the business has managed to reduce debts by more than £3m since January, while also achieving increased levels of profit growth.

Membership levels have increased by 5.2 per cent this year. Like-for-like membership growth is understood to be ahead of the sector average and retail industry LFL sales performance so far.

Total Fitness is also pushing ahead with its turnaround strategy, and investments are being made to refurbish clubs and develop IT.

Board changes have also occurred in the last eight months, with Brian Davidson and Warwick Ley (non-executive chair) appointed in December 2012, while Richard Millman came in as CEO in February of this year.



Total Fitness has reduced its debts by more than £3m since January

Tesco branches into yoga with new leisure destination

One of Tesco's largest stores has unveiled a new shopping and leisure destination in Watford following a major renovation of its 7,430sq m (80,000 sq ft) Extra store.

The transformation project at Watford Extra features a community space that customers can

use free of charge for events such as yoga, baby gym and cookery classes.

This deal follows the announcement of a partnership between Tesco and with budget gym chain Xercise4Less to open in-store fitness clubs (see p36).

Fitness First £77.5 m investment

Fitness First plans to invest £77.5m on renovating clubs, exploring new fitness ideas and developing 15 new sites in major cities across the world.

The move comes as Fitness First's CEO Andy Cosslett looks to revive the business after it came close to administration last year.

It's thought around £44m will be spent on refurbishing old clubs and exploring new ideas that could give the chain an edge in an increasingly competitive market.

Fitness First, which operates more than 330 clubs across the world, will spend £29m of the investment on opening 15 new sites in Asia, Germany and India.

The expansion comes in response to suggestions that there could be more demand for Fitness First's upmarket Platinum gyms in foreign markets. The



Much of the investment will go into refurbishing existing clubs

majority of the new clubs will be based in Asia – in countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand – though two clubs are also being planned for Germany, in the cities of Hamburg and Berlin.

The investment follows a smaller injection of £20m into the UK business earlier this year.

Your Leisure opens Ramsgate centre

Thanet District Council (TDC) and leisure trust Your Leisure have opened a £4.1m swimming centre as part of the development of the Ramsgate Sports Centre in Kent.

The Ramsgate Swim Centre will be operated by Your Leisure and includes a 25-metre pool, as well as a smaller pool for children and a swimming lessons programme. There is also a spa and a Feel Good Factory toning studio.

Your Leisure acquired development funds for the scheme through private sector partner Alliance Leisure. It plans to repay the money over time through increased commercial opportunities brought about by the new spa, while also making savings in other operating departments



The newly opened £4.1m leisure centre includes a 25m swimming pool

– ensuring there will be no additional cost to TDC. The new centre is connected to the existing Your Leisure-operated Ramsgate Leisure Centre, to create one joint facility. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=32621>

People who walk to work have lower diabetes risk

People who walk to work are around 40 per cent less likely to have diabetes than those who travel by car, UK-led research has found.

Published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, the research analysed data taken from a survey of 20,000 people in

the UK, to explore links between health and how people travel to work.

The study produced a variety of findings linking weight, exercise and travel means with the prevalence of health issues. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=v417A>

Fitness First is first operator to launch Tabata

High-intensity interval training workout Tabata was launched across London on 1 September, with Fitness First clubs the first in the world to offer the officially endorsed, scientifically-backed programme.

Tabata's first commercial deal – between Universal Pictures International Entertainment (UPIE), fitness programme producers Big Shot Productions and Fitness First – will see the workout initially available as both group exercise classes and small group training sessions at 50 Fitness First clubs in London.

The Tabata system was developed by Japanese scientist Professor Izumi Tabata while working with the Japanese Olympic speed skating team on their fitness programme. The Tabata method consists of 20 seconds of intense exercise, followed by 10 seconds of rest, repeated eight times over a four-minute period.

According to its developers, Tabata has been scientifically proven to be the most effective way to increase aerobic and anaerobic fitness.



The study examined the impact of exercise

Exercise 'helps depression' among pregnant women

Exercise could improve the mood of pregnant women and reduce their levels of fatigue, according to new research published in *Psychology & Health*.

The study, conducted at the University of Western Ontario, examined the impact of a four-week exercise intervention programme on the psychological states of previously inactive pregnant women.

The results showed that participants reported significant improvements in their mood during the study, while also seeing a reduction in their levels of fatigue.

When publishing their findings, the experts also highlighted that children of mothers who are depressed or anxious during pregnancy have higher cortisol levels at birth and adolescence, as well as impaired cognition skills and greater risk of developmental and mental disorders.

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VP of Group Fitness, 24 Hour Fitness

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New kids' concept for David Lloyd

Health club operator David Lloyd Leisure is to invest £1.35m in rolling out its DL Kids concept for families, with a new facility in Dublin being the latest major investment in this area of the business.

The £750,000 purpose-built DL Kids facility at David Lloyd Dublin Riverview, Clonskeagh, will open to both members and non-members in September.

DL Kids Dublin will feature three multi-purpose activity rooms, a sports hall, play frame, soft play zone, outdoor area, DL Kids café/bar and lounge, providing children aged 0-11 years with a range of programmes running throughout the year specifically designed to complement the way they learn.

It's part of an expansion of the successful model, with an additional £600,000



The first purpose-built David Lloyd Kids facility opened in 2010

earmarked for DL Kids upgrade initiatives at UK clubs this year – including Derby, Knowsley, Nottingham and Warrington.

The David Lloyd Leisure Group operates 81 clubs in the UK and a further 10 clubs across Europe. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=e752C>

New exercise advice needed for children

New exercise advice is needed to protect children from developing heart problems in adulthood, according to research conducted as part of a European Commission-sponsored project.

Published in the *BMC Medicine* journal, the research, which studied 3,000 children, found those under 10 should get between 60 and 85 minutes' exercise each day.

The research observed links between levels of activity among young children and the risk of developing cardiovascular disease when they reach adulthood.

Of those studied, 15 per cent had high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, which suggested they could be at risk. The study also



The research suggests children exercise for at least 60 minutes a day

found that younger boys may need to be more active than the 60 minutes per day currently advised by NHS guidelines in order to keep in shape. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=P9F6M>

Maths model to predict effect of activity on kids' weight

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have developed a mathematical model that predicts how weight and body fat in children respond to changes in diet and physical activity, with the results of the study appearing in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology*.

The model was developed to observe how childhood bodyweight responds to obesity interventions and considers children's unique physiology, including changes in body composition as they grow. Details: <http://lei.sr?a=15G9Y>

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Rob Beale
Head of Sports Health & Fitness
David Lloyd Leisure

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The studio opened in 2010 and was an instant hit

Pure Pilates studio in Ilkley doubles in size

Kirstin Ferrie, the former personal pilates teacher of Duchess of York Sarah Ferguson, has expanded her pilates studio in Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

Ferrie launched the Pure Pilates studio in May 2010 and in the first month had a two-year waiting list of clients. Due to the popularity of her classes, she is now nearly doubling the size of the site.

While the original studio space will benefit from new equipment, there will also be a new private studio area for one-to-one work. It will feature equipment from US-based manufacturer Balanced Body and the new CoreAlign® and a Reformer Trapeze Combo.

Ferrie says: "Since I started the studio three and a half years ago, my dream was always to help more people and ensure that those injured or with a disability could also benefit from the method.

"Currently classes are either individual or for small numbers, but now I can plan to have up to 10 in the new matwork studio. I'm also considering the possibility of introducing other disciplines with suitably qualified instructors."

GymWorks opens in Lancashire

Fitness industry veteran Peter Guy has launched GymWorks – a 13,000 sq ft health club in one of Europe's largest urban developments in Buckshaw Village, Chorley, Lancashire. Guy, who started his 26-year career in fitness with JJB and more recently as head of leisure for DW Sports, has partnered with property developer Craig Winstanley.

The pair have invested £600,000 in the 140-station gym, which is located in the former entertainment room at the historical BAA Systems Aviation House.

Equipment has been supplied by Precor and includes 50 pieces of cardio including the recently launched AMT with Open Stride, alongside Icarian strength units and Conceptz rowers. Functional equipment has been supplied by Escape Fitness, and the changing rooms have been kitted out by Safe Space Lockers.



The club took 10 weeks to build and has 140 stations

There are also 26 group cycling bikes and a 2,000 sq ft studio featuring a nightclub-style sound system and lighting, which changes the colour of the walls in sync with the music.

Fit In Gym swaps Zumba for Group Kick

Members at independent, family-run health club Fit In Gym in Warrington are embracing a new martial arts-based class after losing their most popular Zumba teacher. Fit In Gym was the first health club to introduce Zumba in the local area and, to meet demand, had to timetable the Latin dance-based class seven days a week in its 50-capacity studio.

Owner Sue Williams says: "After coming across a video of Group Kick on YouTube, I took a gamble and replaced our Zumba class with Group Kick. I was nervous about how our members would react, but they embraced

Group Kick brilliantly. We haven't lost any members and everyone loves the programme."

Group X Systems' hour-long Group Kick class combines mixed martial arts moves – from the boxing ring to the fighting cage – with music to build total body strength and improve cardio fitness.

Former hotel sales manager Williams opened Fit In Gym in 2009. After being made redundant she had struggled with high health club membership fees, so surveyed 2,000 people in the local area to see if there was a need for a more affordable place to work out.

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SUPPLIER & TRAINING NEWS

Fitness apps 'to dominate market'

Health and fitness devices will make up half of all wireless accessories shipped by 2018, with shipments of app-enabled devices set to hit 170 million units, according to a new report from Juniper.

The growth in the number of devices shipped will increase from a current level of over 18 million this year. Devices considered in the study included smart watches, smart glasses and other pieces of wireless hardware that link to smartphones.

The study found that the entry of influential brands such as Apple and Google into the market will drive interest and adoption levels of premium, wearable devices. This in turn will lead to greater awareness and an increased knowledge among consumers.

With over 50 per cent of wireless devices shipped this year relating to the healthcare and fitness industries, the study suggests a multi-channel approach will be necessary for businesses to secure a place in the market.

In another recent study, IHS found that a 60 per cent increase is expected in the



IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/MARIBEV

Fitness sensors that link to smartphones will boom

number of sports and fitness apps installed between now and 2017. Figures show that these installations will grow from 156m in 2012 to 248m in 2017. Last year a survey of 400 UK and US consumers, conducted by IHS subsidiary IMS, showed that 62 per cent of smartphone owners who exercise at least once a week would be willing to buy a fitness sensor that connects to their phone. *For more on wearable technology, see page 68.*

New loan scheme to fund Level 3 training

A new government loan scheme has been launched to help people over the age of 24 fund their education for qualifications at Level three and above. Fitness training specialists Amac will benefit from the new 24+ Advanced Learning Loans scheme and can now offer Advanced Learning Loans through its partnership with Canterbury College, for those who wish to study to be a personal trainer or work in exercise referral.

Loan fees will be exempt from VAT and will not have to be paid back until the loanee is earning at least £21,000 a year. Repayments won't start until April 2016.

Amac is also able to offer free or part-funded qualifications at Level 2, including gym



The loans will target professionals over the age of 24

instructor training. Applicants can process loans online for courses starting between the beginning of August and 31 July 2014. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=F3uoG>*

Government plans changes in apprenticeships

The government has revealed radical new plans in a shake-up of the way apprenticeships are funded. The new scheme would see employers funded directly in order to purchase the apprenticeship training they want, as part of proposals to give businesses more control.

The plans announced by Business Secretary Vince Cable are designed to give employers the freedom to choose the training that's most relevant to the needs of the apprentices and their businesses – and which represents the best value for both.

At the moment, three options have been suggested, the first being a direct payment model, which would see businesses register apprentices and report claims for government funding through a new online system. Funds would then be paid directly to them.

The second option would see the use of a PAYE payment model. Businesses would register apprentices through a new online system and then recover government funding through their PAYE return. *Details: <http://lei.sr?a=d6Y4U>*



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Tony Cowen
 Group Operating Officer,
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Jason Hall
 Owner,
 Reynolds Group

Competitive edge

"We focused on providing a great changing experience, which we achieved through our partnership with Craftsman by offering luxurious, well designed facilities."

Matt Manning
 Operations Director,
 Stoke by Nayland Hotel, Golf & Spa

New US report ranks operators by 2012 revenue

US-based magazine *Club Industry* has unveiled its *Top 100 Health Clubs* report, which showcases the fastest-growing US club companies based on 2012 revenue.

LA Fitness – formally known as Fitness International LLC – takes number one spot following its acquisition of 171 clubs from Bally Total Fitness in 2011, and its 2012 acquisition of 32 clubs from Lifestyle Family Fitness and all 36 Urban Active clubs. LA Fitness had a reported 568 clubs by the end of 2012, up from 505 at the end of 2011, with *Club Industry* estimates putting 2012 revenue at US\$1.7bn.

After nine consecutive years in the top spot, 24 Hour Fitness was knocked into second place, with Life Time Fitness coming in third. All the top three surpassed US\$1bn in estimated 2012 revenue.

Club Corp was ranked number four, with US\$754.9m revenue in 2012, followed by Town Sports International at number five with a reported US\$479m.

Chennai Super Kings IPL team to open health club

Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket team Chennai Super Kings is set to launch a health club-cum-resort in Chennai, India.

The 30,000sq ft club will offer a gym, rehabilitation centre, restaurant and café and is likely to open next year. Chennai Super Kings' management hopes to bring fans to one place and keep them connected all year round. There are over 20,000 paid members in the team's fan club.

Open Streets: New training to support street events

Last month saw the first ever National Open Streets Training taking place in the US, designed to help enterprising advocates, local government officials and business groups start their planning processes for Open Streets events.

Open Streets events involve temporarily closing streets to car traffic to make way for members of the community to walk, jog, bike, dance and play. The idea is to get people involved in 'active transit' – walking and biking – to improve their health and lower the environmental impact of driving.

The training discussed the key elements of successful Open Streets, including coalition-building, outreach to key stakeholders, marketing and branding, and choosing a successful route.

Snap Fitness opens in Gurgaon

Global fitness franchise Snap Fitness has unveiled its first club in Gurgaon, in the Indian state of Haryana.

Snap Fitness entered India in 2008 through a franchise agreement with Force Fitness, opening its first centre in Indiranagar,



Snap Fitness: A value offering comprising gym only

Bangalore. It now has 40 fitness centres across the country.

"Our success in the southern part of the country inspired us to make this swift move to the north of India," says Dr Vikram BM, CEO of Snap Fitness India. "We plan to spread far and wide across the country and make fitness affordable and accessible to all. 'Be well' is our motto."

With a footprint that ranges from 232–325sq m (2,500–3,500sq ft), a typical Snap Fitness installation includes treadmills, elliptical machines, stationary bikes, weight machines and free weights. There are no swimming pools or sports courts, focusing on a value offering for those who want gym-based workouts.

Members pay month-to-month and can cancel their gym memberships or put them on hold without penalty. There are no contracts.

Snap Fitness currently has more than 1,300 24/7 fitness centres worldwide and approximately 2,400 locations sold, favouring locations close to where people live. It adds around 15–20 new clubs on a monthly basis.

DiR launches new 'à la carte' package

Barcelona-based health club operator DiR has created an 'à la carte' service, DiR Fit – a new club concept in which the customer only pays for the services and facilities they use.

A basic monthly fee of €20 gives members access to the gym and virtual group exercise classes. They can then choose to pay extra for additional services including towel hire, use of the swimming pool, padel tennis, whirlpool and solarium. The concept was launched at DiR's Claris club on 1 July.

The new concept has been launched as a result of the long recession, VAT increases on fitness, and the proliferation of low-cost gyms.



Add-on extras include use of the swimming pool

Australia: National fitness survey findings

New information from the National Fitness Industry Survey (NFIS) has revealed that the average health club member in Australia and New Zealand is female, with women comprising 71 per cent of all members.

Other findings include the fact that more than 11 per cent of members belong to clubs that open 24 hours a day. However, location was the most commonly quoted reason for joining a gym, closely followed by value for money. Round-the-clock access was not named as a key reason for either joining or leaving a club.

"Large, higher-priced chains are struggling, whereas companies like Jetts

are growing very, very strongly," says Trent Brown, CEO of Ezypay, which conducts the annual survey. "That's why you're seeing clubs turn to the 24-hour model. It almost gives them permission to change their business model. Customers accept a trade-off between the hours a club is open and the service it provides. It's a much more cost-effective model, and that allows clubs to offer lower fees."

Other findings include the fact that, although 60 per cent of members and ex-members want interaction with gym staff every time they visit, 40 per cent say this isn't important.

Holmes Place: Fifth Berlin club



The new Berlin spa club is Holmes Place's 11th facility in Germany, and more clubs are planned

Premium operator Holmes Place opens a new spa club in Berlin, Germany, this month – its fifth club in the city.

The €6m, 3,800sq m site is spread over two levels, including a rooftop terrace offering outdoor classes such as Qi Gong. A Technogym-equipped gym includes 50 internet-connected cardio machines alongside six Kinesis, TRX suspension training and Kinesis Stations. There are also three group exercise studios offering over 90 classes a week: a group cycling studio, holistic studio and Move WELL studio. Xpress 15-minute classes are included in the timetable.

The club's wellness area offers separate saunas for men and women, as well as a large Finnish sauna and steam room, relaxation

rooms, whirlpool, 20m swimming pool, and a city view terrace with further outdoor classes as well as food and beverage options.

The spa has seven treatment rooms, a manicure/pedicure area, a relaxation room and a large lounge area. The club was designed by London architect Sean Hatcher of MCM Architecture Ltd and interior designer Virginia Azevedo of CREATIVS.

The new facility is the operator's 11th in Germany – five in Berlin, two in Hamburg, two in Düsseldorf, one in Lübeck and one in Cologne – with more sites planned. Its total estate now encompasses over 80 clubs in 10 countries: Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Israel.

Fitness First Australia launches The Zone

Fitness First Australia has launched The Zone in Sydney's Central Business District – an inner-city club dedicated exclusively to group training.

The custom-built club comprises six zones:

- Virtual Cycle offers instructor-led and virtual cycling classes.
- Kinesis focuses on the fundamentals of dynamic movement training in a strength-based workout.
- Cross Training offers advanced dynamic movement training using Olympic bars, squat cages, suspension/chin-up bars, torsionators, aqua bags and bumper plates.

• Freestyle is described as a 'fitness playground', with a variety of training methods such as kettlebells, ViPR, ShockWave and Hardcore.

- Functional has a focus on bodyweight, combining suspension and rotational training.
- HIIT is the high-intensity interval training zone featuring equipment such as a sled track, battleropes, kettlebells, plyometric soft boxes and boxing bags.

Qualified trainers lead a series of 15-, 30- and 45-minute sessions for between eight and 12 people, with anything up to 100+ classes a day.

The Zone is open on weekdays only, between 5.30am and 9.00pm.



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THE LATEST FROM EVERYONE ACTIVE

Everyone Active embraces Change4Life

Everyone Active has seized the opportunity to align its annual open event, which invites people into centres every year for free taster sessions and access to facilities, and capitalise on the national impact of the Public Health England's Change4Life campaign. There are 67 Leisure Centres operated by Everyone Active participating in the open day to mark the one year anniversary of the London 2012 Olympics Opening Ceremony.

"Everyone Active and Change4Life have a shared message: adults should be aiming for a minimum of 150 minutes of activity per week for the benefits of a healthy lifestyle," said David Bibby, managing director at Everyone Active. "We strive to offer exciting, inclusive sports and leisure activities at great value, so we're always keen to invite local communities into our centres and help them stay active in daily life."



Beth Tweddle gives out medals to children taking part in the Legacy Games

Everyone Active legacy pledge to get half a million kids active

Everyone Active and Fit For Sport have joined forces with schools in Sutton, Sutton County Council and nearby London boroughs to create a legacy of sport, competition and community engagement. GB Olympic athletes - gymnast Beth Tweddle and swimmer Steve Parry - helped inspire 1,000 7-11 year olds in an exciting day of sport and activity at the Everyone Active David Weir Leisure Centre in Sutton, called the Legacy Games.

Fit For Sport, the UK's leading provider of children's activities, and Everyone Active have pledged to work together to engage 500,000 children across the UK.

25 years getting everyone active

We're celebrating 25 years of helping UK communities get active. At home, at work, or in one of our leisure centres, our mission is to encourage everyone to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity, five times per week. We aim to provide the widest range of activities, the best customer experience and the most comprehensive activity programmes in the UK leisure industry today.

Our people are our most valuable commodity. From our customer service specialists and fitness motivators up to our general managers and company directors, it's our people that make us the UK's number one activity brand.

2013 has been one of our most exciting years so far, so if you want to progress your



New Everyone Active recruits starting out on an exciting leisure career

career in the leisure, sports and fitness industry. Everyone Active is the first choice. We have 90 centres operated on behalf of 34 local authorities across England, so log on to the website at www.everyoneactive.com to search our latest vacancies.

FLAME Leisure Centre of the Year Award

Fareham Leisure Centre was crowned Leisure Centre of the Year for the second time at the ukactive FLAME Awards. The competition was fierce - especially with five other centres managed by Everyone Active on the shortlist.

Ian Cook, area contracts manager said, "We are delighted to have been named Leisure Centre of the Year 2013. Our staff have shown a dedication to our customers that is second to none and this commitment has been recognised with this award. It's testament to all the hard work that we've put in for many years and the fantastic team of colleagues working throughout the centre delivering the Everyone Active experience."

Everyone Active has previously been awarded FLAME's Leisure Operator of the Year award for three years running, in 2010, 2011 and 2012, and the Amateur Swimming Association's Operator of the Year in 2009, 2010 and 2012.



The Everyone Active team from Fareham Leisure Centre with ukactive chair Fred Turok (right) accepting their FLAME award

Everyone Active secures new management contracts

The biggest local authority contract in the leisure industry has recently been won by Everyone Active, adding 10 centres in Brent, Ealing and Harrow to its management portfolio. Contracts have also been secured with Cotswold District Council, Aylesbury Vale

District Council and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council in 2013, bringing the total number of local authority partners up to 34. With the addition of the Brent, Ealing and Harrow centres, the total number of centres Everyone Active operates will be 90.

To find out more about Everyone Active and how you could join the best activity team in the country visit www.leisureopportunities.com/everyoneactive

Jordan adds Barbour and Thatcher

Jordan Fitness has welcomed Stuart Barbour and Pam Thatcher to its team.

Barbour joins the team from a strong sales background within the fitness industry as sales accounts manager. He will be responsible for managing key account customers and distributors based both in the UK and internationally.

With a keen interest in sport, Barbour's role will encompass helping customers get the most out of their Jordan Fitness equipment.

Meanwhile, Thatcher joins Jordan Fitness as financial controller. With extensive experience



Barbour (left) and Thatcher have joined the Jordan Fitness team

within accountancy roles, she will be ensuring effective control of costs and management of financial processes.

Octane Fitness adds Paul Nugent to sales team

Paul Nugent has joined specialist cross-trainer supplier Octane Fitness UK as part of the company's plans to strengthen its sales team.

Neil Campbell, general manager of Octane Fitness UK, says: "I've known Paul from when

he started at Life Fitness many years ago. He will be working the London and South East area and I am sure he will do very well."

Octane Fitness was founded in 2001 and specialises in elliptical cross-trainers.

Ian Warren joins Right Directions team

Industry veteran Ian Warren has joined the Right Directions team as head of health and safety. With a career spanning more than 30 years in the leisure industry, and extensive experience of providing health and safety advice, Warren's role will be to deal with the rapidly growing number of health and safety clients on the company's books.

Warren was part of the team that created CCL Leisure – the first private leisure management company to be formed out of Competitive Tendering in 1988. As well as leading the group's health and safety programme, Warren was involved in the due diligence process prior to CCL's sale in 2004.

Since then, he has gone on to set up a small not-for-profit organisation running a community sports hub and carried out a range of consultancy work.

Warren says: "My aim is to help Right Directions ensure it meets the needs of its



Warren has worked in leisure for more than 30 years

health and safety client base. I plan to do this by supporting the other team members to ensure we have a wide and consistent base of information to supply simple and supportive advice to our clients. I'd like to make the implementation of health and safety something our clients see as worthwhile, rather than a chore."

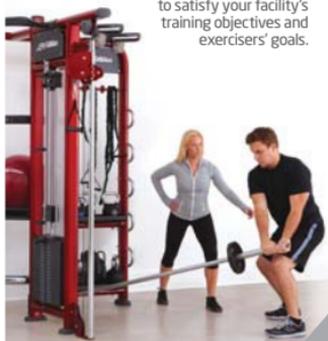
GRAVITY appoints Lloyd Salmon to sales exec role

Lloyd Salmon has joined the GRAVITY UK team as sales executive, focusing on growing the portfolio of smaller studios that could benefit from GRAVITY training on Total Gym equipment. Salmon entered the fitness industry six years ago to become a personal trainer.

He worked out of Esporta and The Gym Group clubs before going it alone, running a successful PT business and setting up Lifechange Bootcamps. With 15 years of sales experience and an understanding of fitness, he is seen as a strong addition to the team.

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WHAT WE LIVE FOR

IHRSA EUROPEAN CONGRESS 2013

Kristen Walsh takes a look forward to the 13th Annual IHRSA European Congress, which takes place on 17-20 October in Madrid, Spain

The IHRSA European Congress features presentations delivered by executives from inside and outside the health club industry, providing thought-provoking commentary on trends shaping business and the fitness industry.

Alongside the seminar programme, a series of networking events, focus group discussions and evening and lunch receptions

provide the opportunity to build relationships with colleagues from across Europe.

On page 26, we offer an overview of the event schedule, picking out some of this year's highlights. But first, Jon Feld speaks to Magnus Lindkvist, the trendspotter and futurologist who will speak at the Congress on Friday 18 October.

Magnus Lindkvist

Trendspotter and futurologist Magnus Lindkvist believes a willingness to fail ultimately leads to success. On Friday 18 October, he will present 'When the Future Begins: Trendspotting, Future-Thinking & the Attack of the Unexpected'.

Q What's a futurologist?
It's someone who tries to figure out what the future holds and how we can create it.

Q What is trendspotting, and how might businesses put it to use?
The word 'trend' meant 'to turn' in ancient Norse. When we trendspot, we're looking for turning points in the currents of society.

If you want to trendspot, you should: overhaul your information diet (how do you feed your brain today and what do you need to replace in that list?); strive to be provoked by a new

idea, person or concept once a week; and travel extensively (it's cheaper than it's ever been, so no excuses, please). You should always have some slack space in the calendar for reflection.

Q When a company uses your services, what does it expect you to deliver?
Some kind of X-factor. They might be on top of the business logic but not the business magic, so they ask me to deliver that. If it's a conference, there's always a speech by the CEO, then the middle managers, possibly an outlook by a chief economist from a bank. But then we need something to broaden the mind, see new possibilities. That's where I come in.

Q Do companies fail if they're unable to spot or respond to trends?
No company ever failed due to a lack of information. What happens instead is that



Lindkvist is a trendspotter and 'futurologist'

success makes you smug and lazy, and you believe you're immune to changes in the environment. Laura Ashley is a good example. It sold the English cottage dream to the masses in the 1980s. When it saw minimalism rising on the horizon, it believed it didn't suit its style or brand and chose to ignore it. Five years later, the company was nearly bankrupt. In management theory, this is known as 'active inertia': you're inert or passive because you've chosen to be, not because you are clueless.

Q The fitness industry has recently seen the emergence of many new offerings - budget clubs, for example, and low-equipment offerings such as CrossFit. How can companies anticipate and respond to disruptions like these?

Disruption is remarkably simple to anticipate. Whenever something comes along that you think is inferior in terms of quality, customer offering or similar, that's when you should worry. The serious competitors always come from below - from cheaper, inferior little siblings, not from the competitors you deemed worthy. In other words, be open to the kinds of players that provoke you.



Lindkvist says a key trend for the fitness industry is the ageing population and 'age group blurring'



While clubs should embrace technology, the same technology will create 'a tsunami of competitors and imitators' as the start-up revolution grows, says Lindkvist

Q You believe it's the invisible trends that have the greatest impact on our lives and society. Can you think of an invisible trend that might be impacting the fitness industry?

Absolutely: the fact that our lives have been getting eight minutes longer per day for the past century. The first person who will reach 200 years of age has already been born. This is partly thanks to the health and fitness industry, but it will also present the industry with new opportunities – and challenges.

Q What do you feel are the key trends affecting the fitness and health industry at the moment?

In no particular order, I see the main trends affecting the fitness and health industry as: ageing and age group blurring; the blurring of industry boundaries (ie how do you strictly define a fitness club, a spa, a hotel, a membership club today?); and the start-up revolution. Millions of young people are growing up with no job security and an abundance of cheap technology. There's a tsunami of competitors, imitators and 'frenemies' on the horizon.

Q How can club operators put those insights to use?

One word: experimentation. Try, fail, learn, recycle failure, try again. Make the failures cheap. Never use the word 'success'. Constantly find new metrics to see the weaknesses and failures of your organisation.

Q You've observed an evolution towards transparency, simplicity, user-friendliness and more power to the individual – all of which means that businesses must simplify their processes. How might that work in the health and fitness industry?

Treo – the manufacturer of the Palm Pilot, a predecessor to the iPhone – used to have a 'three-tap officer' on its payroll to ensure that no command on the Palm Pilot should take more than three taps. Club operators should assign a service design director who has a similarly simple metric – "no-one should ever wait more than X seconds to be served" – and then continuously go through the experience of the club to improve, shave off time and complexity, and add more enjoyment.

Q Is there anything about the fitness industry that, in your opinion, doesn't seem to work?

Too many clubs have lazy membership schemes where a monthly flat rate is charged, meaning there's no yield management – for example, the queues at gyms after New Year are horrendous – and no price differential for different experiences. Similarly, there's little upgrading and/or cross-fertilisation with other lifestyle brands that might interest members – eg if I go to gym X, I might also want to be a member of club Y, exclusive scheme Z, and so on.

Q Can you offer a brief preview of your IHRSA presentation?

I will take attendees on a time-travelling journey from the distant past, to the many contradictions of the present tense – or the 'tense present' as it's sometimes called – to the possibilities of the future and how we can create it.

The full version of this interview can be found in the October issue of *Club Business International* (CBI).

EUROPEAN CONGRESS:

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



The Congress will be held in the beautiful European city of Madrid

Thursday 17 October

After a walking tour of Madrid health clubs, the afternoon will offer a range of supplier seminars from Precor, Ojmar, Technogym, Keiser and MYZONE. An opening reception will take place in the evening.

Friday 18 October

Early morning exercise classes will be followed by breakfast networking roundtables, before Magnus Lindkvist's general session at 9.00am – a session entitled When The Future Begins: Trendspotting, Future-Thinking & The Attack of the Unexpected (see p24).

Concurrent sessions for the rest of the day will cover topics including leadership and vision, profitable sales management, member loyalty in low-cost clubs, and brand development.

Saturday 19 October

Saturday will offer another chance to get involved in early workouts and breakfast roundtables, before concurrent sessions begin at 9.00am. Topics will include PT, business modelling and performance, and attraction.

Afternoon sessions will cover subjects such as community engagement and social media, before a final general session – Top Service Culture: A Key to Success from the Inside Out – by Carla Carvalho Dias, founder of

Visão Integrada, and founder of Top Service Academy in Portugal.

Sunday 20 October

An all-day bus tour of Madrid health clubs is available, from 9.00am until 3.00pm.

BE RECOGNISED FOR EXCELLENCE

IHRSA is seeking nominations for the 2013 European Club Leadership Award, to be presented at the annual IHRSA European Congress in Madrid, Spain.

The award recognises the European club leader who has done the most to advance their company and the industry through strong leadership and performance. Individuals may nominate themselves or others for the award.

The deadline for entries is Friday 6 September. For an application form, please email intl@ihrsa.org



Log on to the website at www.ihrsa.org/congress to view the latest schedule of events, as well as to find out the details of available translation options.

Please note, the Congress schedule is subject to change at any time.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FOR THE CONGRESS

Register by 20 September 2013 for the lowest rates. Additional fees will apply for special activities.

Deadline date	Non-members	IHRSA members
Received by 20 September	€650	€550
Received by 4 October	€695	€595
Received after 4 October	€750	€650

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ACCOMMODATION

The Meliá Castilla (Calle del Capitán Haya, 43, Madrid 28020 Spain) will be the location of all European Congress activities in Madrid.

To reserve a room, call the hotel's reservation department on +34 91 567 50 86 and reference the IHRSA European Congress event code number: 2983433.

Hotel reservation requests can also be submitted online via the IHRSA website – www.ihrsa.org/congress

Discounted IHRSA room rates will be available until Friday 4 October, unless the hotel is sold out prior to this date.

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Traineeship Scheme



David Stalker, UKactive CEO, looks at how the sector should take advantage of traineeships

This month, the Department for Business, Skills and Innovation will make an announcement about the funding of traineeships – a new scheme that was introduced in January 2013 by the Department of Education.

The policy – ‘Traineeships: Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and other sustained jobs’ – aims to get young people into sustainable employment programmes. Starting last month and set to be delivered in 2013/14, the programme is designed to be easy to access and understandable for young people.

Who are traineeships for?

Traineeships focus on young people aged 16–19 years – this may be extended to 24-year-olds in due course – and young people with Learning Difficulty Assessments up to the age of 25. The policy aims to benefit young people who are not currently in a job and have little work experience.

Traineeships have the specific goal of making young people ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of starting the course.

How are traineeships different from apprenticeships or other types of work experience?

The course content, duration and final objective of a traineeship is distinct from any other form of training currently available for young people. There’s a joint emphasis on work placement experience, developing life skills and earning academic qualifications. For example, as well as learning customer service skills on the gym floor, trainees will also learn how to write an effective CV and continue to study the core GCSE courses until a grade of A–C has been achieved.

The Department for Education has built a great deal of flexibility into the courses, developing a range of content that will help trainers build bespoke programmes to get the best out of their candidate.



PHOTO: WWW.SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ALEKSANDR.MARKIN

Traineeships focus on work experience, life skills development and gaining relevant sector qualifications

How will they be delivered?

The Department for Education is encouraging partnerships between employers and education/training providers to maximise all components of the scheme. Employers are encouraged to have a key role in engaging young people and enrolling them on the programme.

Organisations such as schools, colleges and Jobcentre Plus centres and the National Careers Service will also play an important role in informing young people of these opportunities.

How will the traineeships be funded?

As employers are considered key to the success of traineeships, the Department for Education has set aside public funding through The Employer Ownership of Skills pilot, a scheme created by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills which invites employers to develop proposals that raise skills, create jobs, and drive enterprise and economic growth.

Alongside this, the Department for Education encourages employers to form partnerships with existing education or training providers. An employer may also become an approved training provider in its own right some years down the line.

Can these traineeships benefit fitness sector employers?

Employers will be able to determine from the very beginning the type of qualifications and skills they think necessary for their organisation.

The key advantage of traineeships over apprenticeships is that they ensure the quality of candidates isn’t compromised by the nature of the course itself. Employers can be assured that candidates are prepared to take up a career in the sector, and that the accompanying support from educational providers will develop a more well-rounded potential employee capable of moving onto the next stage of training.

Nevertheless, employers will also need to take the time to invest fully in the candidate to get the best out of every young person taking up the course.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on how to get involved with traineeships, contact Stephen Wilson, director of public affairs and policy: stephenwilson@ukactive.org.uk



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THINKING BIG

Working with Exerp, Holmes Place Europe is installing a centralised club management system to manage its clubs in nine countries from its Berlin headquarters

When it comes to implementing a new chain management system, one size does not fit all. Small and medium sized health club groups have very different requirements from multinational fitness chains serving thousands of members across different countries. And, as some operators have learned to their cost, working with a provider with no experience of the health club sector, or trying to adapt a general club management system to serve the needs of a large fitness chain, can be an expensive business.

Bryan O'Rourke is a technology expert and strategic adviser to the fitness industry. As founder and CEO of Integerus, CSO of Fitness Marketing Systems, CSO and partner of the Flywheel Group, and president of the Fitness Industry Technology Council, O'Rourke has observed the devastating impact of failing to invest in a specialist chain management system.

"A well-respected US-based club chain spent more than \$10m trying to

customise a solution with a horizontal partner. They failed. The project was scrapped and the CEO paid the price with his job. But it's not just the capital cost that impacted the company, it was the opportunity cost too," he says.

Many large fitness chains choose to work with a horizontal IT solutions partner and develop a bespoke system from scratch because they believe it will give them a competitive edge. In reality, that's not the case. Large chains face unique and complex challenges. Aside from serving and processing data from thousands of members, many multi-site chains have formed as a result of mergers and acquisitions and therefore work across a variety of inherited legacy systems. They may also operate in more than one country.

Building and maintaining software is fraught with challenges and dealing with such organisational issues demands specialist industry knowledge. A horizontal partner will struggle to cater for the needs of a large fitness chain – such as CRM, billing, retail, inventory, PT and group exercise bookings, cashless vending and access control.

"Partners lacking industry experience don't know what they don't know. This can lead to an increase in the

requirements and scope of the project, delays to the implementation of the system and additional costs. The impact on the business could be significant including unplanned financial requirements, adverse consequences to operations and problems with billing and other reporting needs," says O'Rourke.

By contrast, working with a provider with specialist knowledge of the sector and one experienced in the requirements of large fitness chains in particular, can reap a host of benefits for the business.

An experienced system provider is well placed to challenge the operator's current processes and suggest best-practice alternatives. They will be able to demonstrate relevant, real life systems and will understand the complexities of large projects in terms of large scale data migration, project management etc. Crucially, they can anticipate common challenges during the implementation process, which will ultimately reduce risks, costs and time to market.

"It's very challenging to achieve great outcomes without profound knowledge and experience in implementing systems in the industry," says O'Rourke.

This explains why the premium fitness brand, Holmes Place, chose specialist international chain management software company Exerp from 100 IT companies to implement a new centralised member management system.

The chain has more than 75 clubs

EXERP FACTS

- Exerp's portfolio includes some of Europe's largest fitness operators. Focusing strictly on the needs of large chains, advantages of the Exerp platform include:
- The industry's most comprehensive chain management platform
- Versatile, scalable and well proven in Europe
- Over one million active members in one live system powered by an Oracle back-end
- Comprehensive API allowing easy integration of third-party systems
- A 100 per cent successful track record



The Exerp platform currently operates in chains in 11 European countries



Chain management software has to support many uses, like CRM, billing, retail sales, class bookings and access control

“WORKING WITH A PROVIDER WITH SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE OF THE SECTOR AND EXPERIENCE OF LARGE CHAINS CAN REAP A HOST OF BENEFITS FOR THE BUSINESS”

in 10 countries serving over 250,000 members and its old systems were proving difficult to manage and integrate. Tasks took a long time to complete and vital components such as finance, automated sales and marketing were not integrated into the CRM systems, creating problems with billing, collections, basic financial management, personalised communication and campaign management.

“All these factors ultimately impact our bottom line. Our goal was to have a highly efficient integrated system covering all aspects of our membership experience making management of these aspects quick, easy and efficient for our teams. Most importantly, we wanted the new system to support us in optimising our member experience by connecting flawlessly to our cloud-based digital ecosystem,” explains Doron Dickman, CEO of Holmes Place Europe.

The company used a different system in almost each country it operated in, so one of the challenges was data migration. As specialists in IT consolidation and business optimisation for large health club chains, Exerp was experienced in managing such issues. Its core product, the Exerp platform, was developed exclusively to support large international fitness groups and currently operates in



With Exerp, clubs can choose from a wide range of features to suit their needs.

chains across 11 European countries.

“Exerp had what we needed and was flexible enough to allow us to build customised add-ons to support our specific needs, which ultimately saved time, as well as financial and human resources, without any financial disruption,” says Dickman.

The rollout of the new system completes at the end of this year and will significantly impact business at Holmes Place Europe, says Dickman: “Our vision is inspiring people to live well and with the Exerp platform we are taking a big step towards this vision.

We will be able to manage and monitor all of our European business in one system from our headquarters. The new centralised IT system will allow us to deliver a vastly improved customer experience in synergy with our other systems as well as providing very efficient financial management.”

“It will also help us to better manage our member services and will even identify the future needs of our members with regards to our services, and helping them to move well, eat well and feel well. It truly is a service tool of the future.”

BIG NAME SUPPLIERS JOIN THE CAMEXPO EXHIBITOR LINE-UP

cam
expo 
5-6 October 2013
Earls Court | London

With the UK market for vitamins and supplements estimated to be worth £385 million in 2012, camexpo is an inviting proposition for fitness industry buyers looking to source all the latest natural health and nutrition brands for their clients this autumn

Returning to London's Earls Court on 5-6 October, camexpo's 200-strong exhibitor list features some familiar names from the world of physio supplies, including Vivomed – the UK's leading online supplier of first-aid kits, physiotherapy and sports medicine products (the official medical equipment supplier of rugby league world cup 2013); specialist wholesaler C&P Medical; and Algeos Physio & Rehab – suppliers of the Physiowork, Bodytonix, Barefoot Science; and Ice Power brands.

Other big name first-time exhibitors looking to enjoy some of this vibrant show's buzz include Solgar Vitamins, who'll be showcasing new additions to its supplements range for joints (Solgar® 7) and heart (Folate, the 'body-ready' form of folic acid); Supplete (AOR Canada's sole European distributor); Nucleotide Nutrition, with its immune support and healthy gut supplements NuCell@M and IntestAid@B; and Water for Health, distributors of Biocera's alkaline water products.

They join returning exhibitors like Conscious Foods; A.Vogel; Bionutri; CherryActive; NutriWorks; BioCare; Lamberts Healthcare; Nature's Plus UK; Vital Greens – Vital Protein; G&G Vitamins; the Nutri Centre; Hadley Wood Healthcare; Revital; and Pulsin', who'll launch a new 50g vegan Vanilla Choc Chip protein bar (12g) with the lowest natural sugar in its range so far.



The show attracts a mix of therapists, healthcare professionals and students



Camexpo is for the complementary, natural and integrated health sectors

Specialist natural bodycare and beauty supplies are also well-represented at this year's show, from companies like Green People; Ayurveda Pura London; Mahi Naturals – distributors of U Little Beauty, Organic Natralox, and Australia's leading natural dry skin range Hope's Relief; and Essence of Morocco (a finalist in the 'best new natural beauty & spa product' category at the Natural and Organic Awards in April).

Aside from the new products and innovations, the exceptional two-day training and education event is a big selling point for many repeat visitors. Free conference highlights include keynotes from experts like Patrick Holford, Dr Marilyn Glenville, and Dale Pinnock. "What's great about camexpo is that you quickly get up to date with the current trends and developments in natural healing," says Holford.

For further information and to register for your exclusive FREE ENTRY PASS, visit www.camexpo.co.uk/register using promotional code camx3889 before 4th October.





LIW Live returns after a successful 2012 launch involving Olympian Greg Searle

SEPTEMBER

18-19 | Health+Fitness Business Expo & Interbike Expo

Venue Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, US
Summary

The event brings brands, retailers, press and industry influencers together. Taking place alongside Interbike is also an Outdoor Demo event on 16-17 September, in nearby Boulder City. Web www.healthandfitnessbiz.com

18-20 | 5th Annual Medical Fitness Institute

Venue Pinehurst, North Carolina, US
Summary

A leadership and educational programme aimed at individuals who manage medically integrated health and fitness centres. Developed by the Medical Fitness Association, seminars will include clinical integration/physical referral and communicating with healthcare partners. Web www.medicalfitness.org

18-20 | European Fitness Summit

Venue Barcelona, Spain
Summary

The summit offers suppliers from the fitness, wellness and health industries an opportunity to enjoy face-to-face meetings with decision-makers from leading fitness studios and wellness centres in selected European markets. Web www.european-fitness-summit.com

24-26 | Leisure Industry Week

Venue NEC, Birmingham, UK
Summary

LIW is the UK's largest leisure event, attracting thousands of delegates and more than 350 industry suppliers. The show is now sub-divided into six sectors: Health & Fitness, Pool & Spa, Play & Attractions, Eat & Drink, Leisure Facilities and Sport. Power Hour also launches this year – a chance for delegates to compete in fitness challenges. Web www.liw.co.uk

OCTOBER

17-23 | IHRSA European Congress

Venue Madrid, Spain
Summary

Featuring presentations and keynote speeches from business leaders, both from within and outside of the health and fitness industry. Delegates will also have ample opportunity to network with industry suppliers and colleagues from across Europe. Web www.ihrsa.org/congress

25-27 | The Yoga Show

Venue Olympia, London
Summary

All things yoga under one roof – including free yoga and pilates classes, children's yoga, demonstrations and lectures. The event will include more than 200 exhibitors. Web www.theyogashow.co.uk

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INSPIRING YOUR SPACE

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT ...

Maintaining motivation

The health and fitness industry is based on the premise of improving people's health, but how well is the sector doing in supporting good habits and motivation levels? Are we doing all we can, or are we unwittingly causing members to break good habits?

A quick brainstorm in the office showed that everyone had an experience of how their club, or former club, had lost members as a result of not supporting their habits: changing the time of a popular class, for example, or causing a great instructor to leave by undervaluing them – quibbling over their pay, when an analysis of the loyalty of members within that class would have demonstrated the instructor's worth to the club.

Are clubs supporting their members in maintaining good habits, leaving them to motivate themselves – or worse, actually causing them to break good habits?

Both scenarios are prime examples of the operator not understanding the needs and goals of its members, and not properly analysing the drivers of retention. But why is this happening?

Is it cultural – an inherent lack of communication between clubs and members? Do clubs not really know their members, instead making decisions based on assumptions? Or, even worse, are changes simply made because they are more convenient for the club?

How do operators rectify the problem, getting to know members well enough to consistently support good habits? How do they find out member goals so they can support and motivate them?

Is it a case of regular member surveys, or driving more interaction between staff and members? Should members be used to get feedback? Is social media a reliable barometer? Would having a question of the week on a noticeboard work? Could members be asked a question each time they swipe their card? Or is it just a case of better analysing the data clubs already have?

And how can all the information generated be put to good use? We ask the experts for their thoughts...

ARE HEALTH CLUBS ADEQUATELY SUPPORTING HEALTHY HABITS? EMAIL US: HEALTHCLUB@LEISUREMEDIA.COM

TIM FEARON

The Extraordinary Coaching Co • Owner

“Do clubs do as much as they could to support their members’ habits? Short answer: no. It’s long been known that one of the main reasons for people leaving clubs is lack of attention on the gym floor, yet still instructors fail to make real connections. A chat at induction is about as good as it gets.

If instructors make a point of speaking to members each time they exercised – asking them how they are, what their goals are and giving them some pointers on technique or a challenge to do there and then – what a difference it would make.

The answer? Give staff extra training to give them the confidence to talk to members. Give them strong leadership from the gym manager. Show them how to approach people and very soon it will become automatic.

In the studio, group exercise instructors need to create a sense of community and have a robust strategy for keeping in touch with their clients. They need to use social media – form groups, set up forums. And how about a monthly newsletter for their members? Easy to set up and worth its weight in gold.

Also, before making any radical changes, clubs need to assess whether they are in the best interests of the members. Ask them, survey them, find out first.”



MIKE HILLS

The Retention People • Operations director

“Health clubs might inadvertently be breaking good habits by making decisions based on assumptions. Knowing your members is of utmost importance, to ensure you’re always supporting them in maintaining their positive habits.

This is easier said than done though, and requires regular and meaningful contact using all forms of communication – SMS, email, social media and even snail mail – although none of this can beat in-club interaction between staff and members. If changes are to be made in-club, make sure there’s good data to support them. Therefore, if people are disappointed, at least the reason behind it can be explained.

Some ways of getting to know members can be cumbersome. Member forums can result in a one-sided view from only a few vocal members, while large surveys can result in reams of data that’s often never used. But clubs that effectively capture and analyse data on a regular basis are having great success. Many clubs are doing this using the Net Promoter Score, which provides members with a way of telling the club exactly what’s important to them on a regular basis. It also provides the club with meaningful data in a way that can be easily managed, analysed and responded to.”





PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM / ANWA

Do clubs know members well enough to consistently support good habits?

GUY GRIFFITHS

GG Fit Ltd • Director

“Clubs don’t always know their members and so can make decisions based on assumptions, which can lead to them breaking good habits. Serviced clubs need to give an increasingly personalised approach. That’s difficult when there are 1,000-plus members, but this is what they should be aiming for.

As soon as people join, it’s important to get some information about them and their needs, then use this to help them set goals. Encourage staff to interact with members: have a question of the week that staff can ask, or put it on a noticeboard for members to respond to.

Survey members often: no more than monthly, but no less than quarterly. Keep it simple, with no more than three or four questions. There tends to be most take-up if surveys are done online: Stevenage Leisure saw a 700 per cent increase when it switched its surveys online. And publish the results – members like to see how their comments compare and it leads to better survey take-up. Crucially, deliver on the feedback: even though just publishing results improves retention, it’s best to respond to them.

Also, for true feedback, it’s interesting to survey ex-members as they leave and 30 days later, as their reasons may change.”



MIKE HILL

Leisure-net Solutions • Managing director

“What the fitness industry is generally quite good at is setting up systems to get feedback when things go wrong. What it’s not so good at is getting systems running and training staff to get ongoing, informal feedback.

There needs to be better staff training to encourage them to speak to members, and staff also need to be empowered to feed this information back to management.

Used on a monthly or quarterly basis, the Net Promoter Score is effective. It allows members to give regular feedback on the positive as well as the negative, and because it’s a short survey based around whether they would recommend the club on a scale of 0 to 10, the response rate is high. Happy members are equally as likely to respond as unhappy members.

A bold way of getting feedback would be to offer a guarantee, such as promising to help members achieve their goal in three months or give them their money back, like Premier Inn with its good night guarantee.

Customer forums and focus groups could also be better used, creating a panel of representative members to act as a sounding board for any changes or complaints. This could be done via email or NING, which is like a closed Facebook page.”



JON WRIGHT

The MD of budget operator Xercise4Less talks to Kate Cracknell about a brand new partnership with Tesco

Jon Wright is a happy man, and justly so. When we speak, the MD of budget gym chain Xercise4Less has just announced a new partnership with Tesco to open health clubs within Tesco Extra stores – the larger format, out-of-town hypermarkets.

And there will be no half measures with these new clubs. Standalone Xercise4Less sites typically measure 2,800–3,700sq m (30,000–40,000sq ft) and the first in-store Tesco site – set to open in Stockton-on-Tees, north-east England, in October – will measure 3,000sq m (31,910sq ft).

“You need space with a budget operation, and we wouldn’t go below 30,000sq ft now unless it was an exceptional circumstance,” says Wright.

“We would go beyond 40,000sq ft though, if the location were right – outside of the Tesco deal, we’re currently looking at a site in Bradford that’s 47,000sq ft. We just feel we need the size, firstly to put in the additional facilities we like to offer in our clubs, and secondly to cope with the huge number of memberships that we

generate. We average 11,000 members per club now, all on 12-month contracts; in Leeds we have 13,000 members.

“So we need space, because it doesn’t matter if you’re paying £15 or £50 a month: if you can’t get on kit, you’ll leave.”

Mixing it up

Supplied by Matrix, Xercise4Less gyms typically offer 400 stations of CV and resistance equipment alongside a large studio. The large footprint of the sites also means there’s space for additional facilities: there are ladies-only gyms in every club, as well as combat areas offering boxing rings, bags and MMA cages. CrossFit zones are next on the agenda.

“To put in a boxing ring costs £3,000 or £4,000 – the same as a couple pieces of kit,” says Wright. “MMA cages and CrossFit rigs cost even less. They cater for multiple users, create theatre in the club and keep things fresh and interesting for members. They also help us attract PTs into the business, ensuring they have the facilities they want to train their clients.

“We’re not trying to do all things to all people, but we do want to offer a lot



(above left) Xercise4Less will open clubs in Tesco stores, and (above right) Xercise4Less offers memberships from £9.99 a month



MD Jon Wright says the only budget thing about his clubs is the price

of variety. I know it sounds a bit like a political statement, but we really do want to bring fitness to the masses, appealing to a broad spectrum of people and giving them the opportunity to try lots of different activities. If you just keep doing the same programme, day after day after day, you're not going to get the results, and we're very much results-driven. We want people to get in shape, lose weight and be fit and healthy. That's our goal."

He continues: "One of our early press releases ended up in the *Yorkshire Post* about three years ago, and the paper came up with the term 'the people's gym'. That's pretty much what we're trying to achieve: making fitness available and accessible to everybody.

"With our standard monthly fees of £15 – or £9.99 off-peak – we've already addressed one of the biggest

"By opening clubs in supermarkets, we're addressing the issue of accessibility"

obstacles to joining a gym: cost. Now, by opening clubs in supermarkets, we're also addressing the issue of accessibility. We're trying to remove all the barriers to exercise that we can."

Growth plans

Wright set out on the budget gym path four years ago when he changed the model of his existing facility.

"We opened Exercise Health and Fitness Club in Castleford in 2006 and it wasn't hugely successful for the three years it operated as a traditional club,

breaking even at best," he says with refreshing honesty.

"We switched to the budget model in January 2009. I don't think we were visionary in that respect though – the club just wasn't making any money and we knew we had to do something different, simple as that.

"We took the paid instructors off the gym floor, so anyone who wanted a programme had to see a personal trainer. We also removed two of our three studios, reducing the class timetable, to make way for more kit, ▶



Exercise4Less clubs typically offer 400 stations of CV and resistance equipment alongside a large studio with a full class programme

- ▶ allowing us to cater for higher volumes of members. Those were the only physical changes though, as there were no wet facilities at the club.

"We dropped our monthly fees from £25 to £15 and pretty much doubled the membership in the first three months. It's not easy changing models by any stretch of the imagination – that's one of the reasons we've steered clear of all the Fitness First clubs that came onto the market – but we managed to turn a business that was breaking even into something quite profitable within 12 months. We haven't looked back since."

The rebranded Exercise4Less expanded at a measured pace over the next few years, focusing primarily on the north of England. However, with club number 10 set to open in Nottingham this month, terms already agreed on sites in Bristol, Swansea and Falkirk, and Tesco lining up potential sites across the country, it's clear the business now has a broader geographical spread in its sights.

The speed of the rollout is also set to accelerate, even independently of the Tesco deal. "We've just completed a minority equity sale to private equity firm The Business Growth Fund: we've sold 17.5 per cent of the business and raised £5m, which will allow us to massively speed up our rollout. We now expect to open 100 sites in the next three years, and we have the next 30 lined up. We'll start ramping up to opening two clubs a month by the end of this year, and then probably three a month next year and going forward. By this time next year, we think we'll have 34 sites open."

Low-cost, full-service

So how does today's Exercise4Less offering compare to the original remodelled site? What does 'budget' look like at an Exercise4Less facility, and who is the target market?

"The phrase we use is: 'The only thing budget about us is our price,'" says Wright. "We have staffed receptions, a wide range of facilities and full studio

"We turned a business that was breaking even into something quite profitable within 12 months"

timetables – around 40 classes a week, mostly with live instructors, although we're also trialling MyRide to offer some virtual classes too."

There are also add-on offerings such as baby ballet and karate, which cost extra, with plans to launch summer camps and an Exercise4Kids programme next year. "I think we've taken the best elements of budget clubs and the best elements of traditional clubs and combined them," says Wright.

He continues: "The demographic we appeal to tends to be quite young, so our facilities have a clubby vibe. There's a female bias: around 60 per cent of our members are women thanks to our focus on group exercise, as well as our ladies-only gym areas.

"And because our clubs are staffed, they're very friendly. We think that's critical. We'd never go down the faceless, self-service route. That's not what we're about at all, and it's particularly important when 30 per cent of our members have never belonged to a gym before."

That's as may be, but with most budget operations only able to deliver low prices thanks to a heavy reliance on IT over staff, how can Exercise4Less afford to employ full-time receptionists?

"The profit margin we make on secondary spend alone covers the reception costs," says Wright. "We sell a lot of supplements, including quite a few female ranges."

He continues: "When we were in Las Vegas for IHRSA in March, we visited a number of clubs. They all had massive retail areas at the front selling supplements. Obviously supplements are much bigger in the US, but they're becoming much more mainstream in

the UK now too. We see that as a huge growth area and will look to build bigger retail outlets in our receptions."

Role of technology

Beyond the reception staff, however, technology is as vital to Exercise4Less as it is to other budget clubs. "Everything's web-based now – tills, CCTV, security... even our environmental controls are web-based, so we can control all our air handling and air conditioning units from head office."

The focus on the gym floor remains on personal training: around 20 per cent of members take up PT at £25 an hour, with 10–15 PTs working in each club on a rental basis. However, technology is also used to drive high levels of member education, with an extensive library of instructional videos, tips and advice freely available on the Exercise4Less website to help members drive results.

"We're also launching downloadable programmes this month," says Wright. "We already have QR codes on all the equipment – just swipe your iPhone for a demo video on how to use the kit – but from this month you'll be able to buy one of our new six-week programmes for £0.99. If you'd like, you can also buy a nutritional programme that accompanies it for £0.49. You just download them onto your iPhone."

"For now, we've come up with about 20 starter programmes such as Get Strong, Get Fit, Get Trim. Some are more male-orientated and some female-orientated. We'll have big boards in all our clubs with details of the programmes and corresponding QR codes, so members can just scan the one they're interested in and download it. At the end of the six weeks, the ▶

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The Colonel (above left) is used in marketing and online videos to show members how to do exercises in the gym (above right)

- ▶ system will prompt you to move on to the next stage – we've developed six stages to work through."

Tesco partnership

So turning again to the Tesco partnership, what differences will there be – if any – between the Xercise4Less at Tesco offering and the standalone Xercise4Less clubs?

"Size and offering-wise, I don't think the model will vary much," says Wright. "If anything, I imagine our Tesco sites will be even more female-friendly. We'll monitor and evaluate as we go along, and it will depend on the demographics of the location, but it's quite likely the free weights won't be as big as we'd normally put in, for example.

"The opening hours will be the same as at other Xercise4Less sites – 6.00am-10.00pm during the week and 6.00am-8.00pm at the weekend – unless that conflicts with Tesco's opening hours.

"They will be membership clubs just like the others too, with the same £15 a month fee. People can visit on a 'pay as you go' basis, to tie in with their shopping, but that costs £5 a time and membership gives you reciprocal use of all our gyms anyway, so really it makes sense to opt for the £15 a month deal.

"I expect usage patterns to be pretty much the same as at our other clubs too,

as the sites are similar – they're all big, out-of-town clubs. When we do our due diligence on a new site, one of the things we look for in any case is to be close to a big supermarket, as we know that will give us huge footfall.

"From our perspective, the key benefit of the new partnership is that it offers prime locations through which we can reach more people, to get even more people into fitness."

Meanwhile, the partnership helps Tesco reinforce its healthy living message: the supermarket chain already announced a deal with online lead generation company payasUgym.com late last year to provide gym passes to up to 16 million Clubcard members (see <http://ei.sr?a=aIF2U>).

"Our store will continue to offer everything our customers need for their weekly shop, with the added benefit of a gym to help them lead a healthy lifestyle," says Doug Wilson, Tesco corporate affairs manager. "The health and wellbeing of our customers and staff has always been a key focus for us. Fitting exercise into our days is never easy, but having a gym alongside the Tesco store means customers can access the facility at a time that suits them."

The agreement is essentially a landlord/tenant deal, with the clubs operated by Xercise4Less. Wright says:

"We'll open the first in-store club next month – the first of many – and we're already in discussions about the next few sites. Going forward, we'll work together to identify potential locations.

"If you'd spoken to me 12 months ago, our business plan was to get to 40 clubs by mid-2016 in the north of England. We've now rewritten that business plan to get to 100 clubs UK-wide in the same timeframe. One of the catalysts behind that was the Tesco deal – it's a great springboard to get us UK-wide."

Success story

So what does Wright believe is the secret of Xercise4Less's success?

"Timing, clearly: there's never been a better time for a budget offering, with the state of the economy driving demand. I also think the lack of good customer journeys within the fitness sector as a whole plays into the hands of the budget operators – if premium clubs don't look after their members, it only helps reinforce our value for money message.

"But the biggest thing has been the impact of the economy on the cost of setting up and running clubs – more specifically, property. Our property costs are already a bit lower than for other operators, as we opt for larger out-of-town units, but we're probably paying no more than 30–40 per cent of what we'd have been paying six years ago. And we're still seeing downward pressure on commercial property. I can't see that recovering for at least another 10 years. That's plenty of time to grow the Xercise4Less estate to the 100-club mark and beyond." ●

"The model won't vary much. If anything, our Tesco sites will be even more female-friendly"



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EASY DOES IT

ABIGAIL HARRIS PAYS A VISIT TO EASYGYM'S NEW FLAGSHIP SITE IN THE HEART OF LONDON, AND SPEAKS TO ITS CEO ABOUT PLANS FOR THE PREMIUM LOW-COST MODEL

“**F** or us, it's always about location,” explains Paul Lorimer-Wing, CEO of easyGym, as he leads me into the company's new flagship site in The Plaza on London's Oxford Street. “London was key for us – a statement of intent to show we're a serious player. There's no better location than this for our model: it's convenient to thousands of people and nothing in the area comes close to beating us on our two defining factors: size and price.”

Size is certainly something no-one can deny this new site has – it's so vast I can't take it all in at first glance – and at £19.99 a month, it undercuts the nearest competitors by at least £50.

“There's no better way to enter the central London market than with a 26,000sq ft gym right in the middle of Oxford Street for under £20 a month!” says Lorimer-Wing.

Opened on 24 June, easyGym Oxford Street is the company's seventh site, following Slough, Wood Green, Birmingham, Cardiff, West Croydon and Ilford. It's managed by Fore Capital Partners, who founded the concept and have a brand license agreement for the famous 'easy' name.

In Oxford Street, the fitness area is split into distinct zones, but this does nothing to detract from its vastness. It comfortably houses 42 treadmills, 30 cross-trainers, 27 bikes and 14 Adaptive Motion Trainers (AMT) – all from Precor's 880 Line, with P80 consoles offering Preva Networked Fitness. There are also 10 Concept2 Rowers, two Stairmaster steppers and an 8.5m TRX frame – and still room to spare.

Moving through the gym, a fixed resistance zone houses the Precor Discovery line – three pieces of every kind of selectorised equipment, plus

two of each plate-loaded – as well as 15 cable machines. Meanwhile the functional Freedom Zone is a space where, according to Lorimer-Wing, members can “pick and choose... an empty space for people to do exactly as they wish”. But here, 'empty' still means stacked with Escape Fitness and Absolute Performance kit, as well as a Power Plate Pro 7 vibration platform.

Just when I thought there could be no more, round the corner I find the huge free weights zone, with an extensive array of Precor Icarian plate-loaded equipment and Escape free weights.

Size matters

“It's certainly huge,” says club manager Kelly Rush. “The sheer amount of kit – 25 per cent more than the average easyGym – means people are sold the minute they walk through the door. They already know the price and there are no



There are plans to offer impromptu functional training sessions on the gym floor



ALL PHOTOS: STUART HOIT

contracts, no catches. If they want out, we ask for just five days' notice. I don't think anyone does budget quite like us."

"Since the first site, our philosophy has been to provide a quality, affordable experience," says Lorimer-Wing. "We strip out the frills to give great value, but still have top of the range equipment, tasteful décor and quality fittings. That's what being part of 'easy' is about, creating a product that doesn't feel weak or cheap. Low-cost doesn't have to mean basic."

In terms of interior design, raw blockwork and metallic finishes give the gym an urban feel. Lorimer-Wing explains: "Our primary focus was pure functionality. We took the site right back to its core, then extensively reconfigured it to meet our standards. We didn't take shortcuts – for example, the gym has a high-spec floating floor and we commissioned a graffiti wall – but we saved money by leaving the steel girders exposed and keeping the décor simple."

Costs are also kept down by eliminating front desk – members join at kiosks by the entrance, and gain entry by using a personal pin or by pressing a bell to call one of the two staff members always on duty on-site. "One of the reasons we're not 24/7 is that I like gyms



to be staffed," explains Lorimer-Wing. "I don't dispute the convenience of 24/7, or discount it altogether as we may adopt it in the future, but when and if we do, clubs will still always be staffed."

Speaking personally

But if members do want 'frills', these are available – and in line with the easyGym

There's a huge free weights area (above) and a resistance zone with Precor strength equipment (left)

philosophy, costs are transparent.

"Unlimited access to 50 classes a week in our 1,800sq ft studio costs £11.99, or £4 per class. And anyone can walk in off Oxford Street and pay £5 for a full day pass," says Rush.

Meanwhile the Preva Media Package – available on all cardio kit and allowing members to watch TV, browse the web, check emails and track workouts – is free for four weeks and £1.99 a month thereafter. Jez Whiting, director of sales for Precor, says: "This new feature enabled easyGym to purchase top of the range Precor equipment but still charging a low membership fee. Members can decide whether to pay a little extra, with the fee generating income to help pay for the initial equipment investment."

All memberships come with a free, voluntary induction, but there are also six PTs available for follow-up sessions – easyGym puts a cap of six self-employed PTs in all its clubs, each charging whatever they choose within easyGym's agreed parameters of £20–£50 a session. ▶

- ▶ “Capping numbers in this way helps us ensure the calibre of our PTs, as well as enhancing their earning capacity,” says Lorimer-Wing. After paying a monthly retainer fee, PTs are free to keep 100 per cent of their profits.

Lorimer-Wing continues: “We don’t look to make money out of our PTs and we charge them less than they’d pay anywhere else; the making of any easyGym is not about the success or failure of its personal trainers. All we demand is that they give quality, affordable service. We look to them to use that freedom to monitor members and identify those who need assistance.”

The bottom line

Breaking even in a site of this size and location can’t be easy, and attracting enough members to make a profit has to be a worrying consideration – especially as full capacity is 7,500 members.

The site was acquired from Virgin for a “significant spend”, but Lorimer-Wing remains unfazed: “I don’t for a minute think we’ll struggle to attract members here. Yes, if you’re only charging £19.99 a head it’s a volume business, but this is a unique offering and we already have more members than we needed to break even on the refurb and build costs. “Our very first member was the MD of an investment bank. He could afford any gym, but he chose us. That’s just one example of the huge spectrum of members we attract.

“Oxford Street is a world-famous shopping hub, so we’re surrounded by workers and businesses. These are our



ALL PHOTOS: STUART HOIT

easyGym Oxford Street sees its group exercise studio as one of its core retention tools

peak members for whom convenience is key. Thanks to the volume of equipment in the club, they can come in at 6.00pm and be guaranteed a quick workout.”

The club can accommodate up to 500 people at any one time, and because of this easyGym has been forced to adapt its model slightly – installing 10 showers instead of the usual four, for example, to prevent queuing.

So what about the ‘tumbleweed times’ – all the more noticeable in such a large space? “There are three universities within walking distance, so students will visit at irregular times and we’ll be marketing hard during Freshers’ Week,” says Rush. easyGym is also marketing on Oxford Street itself, outside tube stations, and using online SEO and PPC ads to keep the buzz going.

“Across our portfolio, all gyms are well attended during the day and we believe Oxford Street will be no different in time,” says Lorimer-Wing. “In addition,

as a city centre location, we have very defined high and low usage points. Members may choose to rearrange their schedule to make use of the gym during quieter times, potentially further increasing membership capacity.”

It seems worries about acquiring members won’t keep the team awake at night, but – particularly with so many members to look after – what about keeping them? “Our studio will be one of our biggest retention tools. Classes will create a community to keep people coming back,” says Rush. “I also plan to run small, impromptu classes on the gym floor – CrossFit, TRX and functional training – creating little hubs using PTs to encourage people to work out in different ways to maintain interest.”

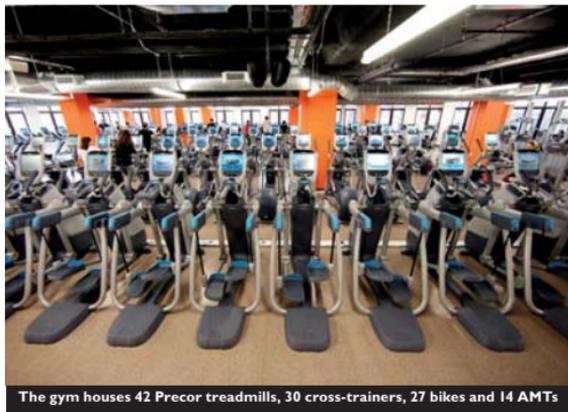
Never stand still

Although he now has his flagship site, Lorimer-Wing has no intention of stopping there. At the time of going to press, the next site was days from opening in Southampton, and the company is looking to ramp up its rollout and add a further six to 10 sites during 2014. Although unwilling to say exactly where the easyGym expansion machine is heading next, Lorimer-Wing admits: “It will be important for us to continue our London focus.”

The aim is to build a portfolio of 50 clubs in the next few years, opening a maximum of 10 a year, and alongside this take easyGym into Europe. “We continue to enjoy strong support from our investors [a Middle Eastern consortium and South African private equity fund] and we’ll most likely enter the European market next year,” he says.

“Although we talk about 50 sites, we may well go further. We’re looking to build a brand for the very long term – there isn’t an end date in mind.”

Returning to Oxford St, he adds: “Our strap line – and philosophy – is ‘freedom to do more’, and although we can’t be everything to everyone, with this site we can and will be a lot of things to a lot of people.” ●



The gym houses 42 Precor treadmills, 30 cross-trainers, 27 bikes and 14 AMTs



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RESEARCH ROUND-UP

US scientists have discovered that exercise has an impact on neurons in the brain that make it more resilient to stress

Calming influence

It's commonly accepted that regular exercise helps reduce anxiety and stress, but just how it does this has not been clear. What's also confused scientists is how exercise can help people feel more calm when it actually stimulates the growth of new, more excitable/active neurons in the ventral hippocampus – the main part of the brain that helps to regulate anxiety.

However, scientists at the University of Princeton in the US now think they have the answer to both of these conundrums. Their findings were published in the May 2013 edition of the *Journal of Neuroscience*^{*}.

Shocking test

The findings were based on a small study of adult mice. One group of mice was given unlimited access to a running wheel, while another group was not and remained sedentary and caged. As natural runners, mice will cover up to 2.5 miles daily on a wheel.

After six weeks, all mice were briefly exposed to cold water to activate the ventral hippocampus. An analysis of brain activity showed that the cells of active and sedentary mice responded in different ways almost as soon as they were faced with this stressful situation.

Brain-altering activity

The scientists discovered four underlying mechanisms at work when the mice were exposed to the cold water.

In the neurons of the sedentary mice, the shock spurred an increase in 'immediate early genes' – short-lived genes that are rapidly turned on when a neuron fires. However, the active mice did not have these genes in their neurons, which suggests their brain cells



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Exercise helps shut off excitement in the area of the brain that regulates anxiety

did not immediately leap into an excited state in response to the cold water.

Instead, the brains in active mice showed every sign of controlling reactions above and beyond what was observed in sedentary mice – which is where the three other mechanisms come into play.

In the active mice, there was also a boost of activity in inhibitory neurons when they were exposed to the cold water. These inhibitory neurons keep excitable neurons – those more likely to rapidly respond to stimuli – in check, thereby shutting off excitement in the ventral hippocampus.

Simultaneously, the scientists observed that the brain neurons in the active mice released more of the neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which dampens neural excitement. Finally, a protein that helps to deliver and release GABA into the brain was also present in higher amounts in the non-sedentary group.

In short, the scientists found that physical activity rewires the brain to cope better with stress.

Treating anxiety

This is one of the first studies to focus in depth on the impact of exercise on the ventral hippocampus. As such, it has helped to pinpoint the important brain cells and regions related to anxiety regulation. The research also shows that the brain can be extremely adaptive, tailoring its own processes according to the lifestyle and surroundings of an organism.

Senior author Elizabeth Gould, Princeton's Dorman T Warren professor of psychology, says: "Understanding how the brain regulates anxious behaviour gives us potential clues about helping people with anxiety disorders. It also tells us something about how the brain modifies itself to respond optimally to its own environment."

^{*}Gould E et al. Physical exercise prevents stress-induced activation of granule neurons and enhances local inhibitory mechanisms in the dentate gyrus. *J Neurosci*, May 2013



Clubs can easily create a training rig to suit their needs and budget

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Functional training rigs are the new must-have equipment for any gym on the cutting edge of fitness. After much research, consideration and deliberation, Physical Company is extremely proud to launch Torque Fitness's X-Lab onto the UK market. While there are many fine rigs out there, X-Lab outperforms the competition in terms of practicality, scalability and value. Thanks to some very clever design features and its unique modular concept, X-Lab can turn almost any space into a functional training powerhouse. Hook that up with Cyclone Training programming and the fearsome array of functional kit and you've got the definitive rig concept to fuel the functional training revolution.

CLEVER PRODUCT

X-Lab is all about fitting into your business. The ingenious shape, configuration and attachment options mean you can get more people training per square foot than any other rig. The 1.0S configuration has a footprint less than 30 square feet, but allows six people to work out simultaneously. Doing the same exercise.

Getting that much more training space per square foot was enough to get us excited about X-Lab, and being able to lead a group training session so easily will keep your instructors happy. But what you're really going to love about X-Lab is the modular system that grows with your business.

Choose from one of 15 standard configurations or design your own using the modular sections. In six months, training will be going so well you may want to expand your functional training area. In a year you may have new premises with twice as much square footage. With X-Lab, you just buy the extra base sections you need and reconfigure the rig to suit your situation.

The clever folk at Torque Fitness kitted the X-Lab out with all the interchangeable training stations you could need, including Ground Rotational Trainer, Plyo Step, Dip Bars, Ball Target, Bag Anchor, Plyo Rebounder, Weight Stack Adjustable Pulley System and High Bars. There are even accessory trays that keep all your kettlebells, med balls and other kit tidy and close by, without having to buy separate storage racks.

CLEVER PROGRAMMING

Physical Company is so excited about X-Lab and the impact functional training is going to make in your club, it's offering on-site instructor training free with every purchase of X-Lab 1.3S and above. 'Cyclone Training' gives instructors a group training concept, with the ability to adjust the class with different stations and varying class numbers. Exercisers move after performing a drill at each station, creating a cyclone of fitness fury.



X-Lab: A training powerhouse

CLEVER PRICES

The X-Lab 1.3S configuration costs £4,581.20 plus VAT, with individual training stations starting at £115.95 plus VAT. A fully operational functional X-Lab training rig with all the stations needed for the 1.3S comes in at under £6000 plus VAT. That's value that you won't find with any other rig, and there's all the additional accessories you'll need, from suspension trainers and punching bags to med balls and kettlebells.

Physical Company believes your business deserves the highest quality equipment, designed by people who understand fitness and backed up with exceptional programming, at prices to suit your budget. Visit www.physicalcompany.co.uk to view the full equipment range or call 01494 769 222 to discuss fitting X-Lab into your club.

LEAN & MEAN

Doug Werner outlines the powerful impact that the 'Lean' protocol can have on a health club's sales process

The health club industry has come a long way in the past 30 years, from the intimidating spit and sawdust gyms of the early 80s to the 10,000sq m, all-inclusive 'super clubs' of the 21st century. During that time, operators have consistently benefited from advancements in equipment, programming, training, facility design, sales and marketing, and member services technology, with innovation and invention helping to overcome any challenges to profitability.

Recently, however, the combination of weak economic conditions and the proliferation of resilient competition across all sectors and price brackets within the market have made it harder than ever for clubs to differentiate themselves and grow. What then? When all else fails, what are the options for improving profitability?

One obvious answer is to simply reduce operating expenses. Unfortunately this strategy frequently requires a leap of faith and can be fraught with guesswork. Done without precision, cost-cutting can easily backfire and have the reverse effect on profits: as many operators have experienced, operational decisions such as cutting payroll, delaying improvements to facilities, stretching supplies or reducing marketing spend can lead to a decline in member retention or acquisition and, with it, losses to the bottom line.

The Lean philosophy

So how can a service entity be more precise when trying to improve profitability through cost-cutting?

One methodology used with great success by thousands of manufacturing companies around the world is Six Sigma, a business discipline that focuses on 'increased productivity through improved quality control'.

Using Six Sigma, manufacturers can closely analyse quality control – from parts and materials sourcing through to customer service – by using the knowledge of the production line personnel who actually do the work. This type of strategy goes back as far as Henry Ford and the Model T. More recently, firms like Toyota, Motorola, GM and even Coca-Cola have benefited dramatically from Six Sigma applications.

But what of companies that don't actually manufacture anything? More

specifically, how can health clubs benefit from the highly productive business principles epitomised by Six Sigma?

Healthtrax Fitness and Wellness in the US provides a great case study. Acknowledging the negative impact of an overly complicated membership sales system, which was hurting both sales productivity and sales associate retention, in December 2011 the health club operator turned its attention to a rapidly growing productivity philosophy known as Lean.

As defined by James Womack, author of *Lean Thinking* and founder of the Lean Enterprise Institute in Boston, US: "Lean is a set of business principles and tools used to create and deliver value as the customer defines it, while consuming the fewest resources possible, by fully utilising the knowledge, skills, passion and thinking of those who perform the work." Put more succinctly, Lean





improves productivity by eliminating waste and ridding an organisation of clutter, and is therefore essentially a non-manufacturing answer to Six Sigma.

What makes Lean unique to most companies is that the process does not rely on executives who are often far removed from the front line of the business, but on those who actually do the work day in, day out, at the coalface.

Following a highly structured and diligent team approach, Lean can be applied to nearly any organisation that relies on the systematic processing and flow of information, goods or services. With a strong focus on the elimination of wasted effort, procedures and resources, Lean can particularly benefit organisations with multiple management layers, operating systems or locations, and especially organisations that have experienced years of operational evolution.

Setting goals

The Lean transformation of a business – applying the Lean process to rid the organisation of operational clutter – begins with the designation of a Lean facilitator. Ideally this change agent would be someone who's well trained in Lean transformation procedures, with a degree of familiarity with the client's business and a successful track record with similar projects. Their main function is to protect the company's Lean mission and corporate values, and to direct the process in accordance with Lean business principles and procedures. However, a good facilitator can also help identify appropriate productivity goals. These must be well defined, specific, and limited to one or two critical goals.

Common examples of productivity goals for health clubs are: improve membership sales productivity by x per cent, improve ancillary sales

▲ Going Lean can improve staff morale, which in turn means happier members

productivity by y per cent, or improve member services productivity by z per cent. By definition, an improvement in productivity can come as a result of higher output (sales, revenues, usage, etc), lower input (capital, expenses, time, etc) or a combination of both, so the process is not focused strictly on cost-cutting. In fact, the entire project can be jeopardised if staff perceive this to be simply a payroll reduction strategy.

The Lean transformation process then begins with a Value Stream Map (VSM) Charter which clearly articulates the problem, the Lean goals, and the areas of the organisation that have an impact on either one of these (see Healthtrax's VSM charter on p52).

The VSM Charter is determined by the senior management team in advance ▶



▲ Setting productivity goals: Healthtrax's main objective was to reduce the people cost per new membership sold by 25 per cent

► of the Lean journey and is used to help guide the entire process from start to finish. As you will see, our main goal at Healthtrax was to reduce our people cost per new membership by 25 per cent, from an average of US\$160 to an average of US\$120.

Mapping the future

A team of employees deemed to be subject matter experts is then handpicked to conduct a VSM workshop, to begin the task of more closely analysing the problem as well as identifying the solution(s).

The selection of this team is one of the most critical steps in the entire process: each participant should be very committed to, and heavily engaged in, the process and highly motivated to achieve the desired results. The team should consist mostly of hands-on staff involved in all or most of the procedures to be reviewed, with varying degrees of experience, and should rarely include anyone from the executive management team, or anyone with much ownership over the existing standard work.

The value stream mapping process begins with the identification of the customer or the entity that will benefit most from the Lean transformation. This is not always an obvious choice. For example, if the goal is to improve membership sales productivity – as

HEALTHTRAX VSM CHARTER

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Healthtrax is convinced that its membership sales productivity suffers from an overly complicated and expensive sales process and sales management system. This challenge to productivity also affects sales associate earnings, morale and retention.

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Improve sales associate retention by 50 per cent in each centre for FYE 2012.

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was the case at Healthtrax – then the 'customer' is quite likely the membership sales associate. The entire Lean project will then focus on all the operating factors that can affect the productivity of the sales associate.

The VSM team reviews each and every activity required to complete the standard work carried out by the sales associate within the existing sales process. A Current State Value Stream Map is drawn up to analyse the quality and effectiveness of each step currently used, and identify specific areas for improvement. This is the discovery part of the process.

Once the current state has been mapped, the VSM team then begins to map the Future State – the way the business would ideally like the process to work. This is where the fun and creativity begins! If the right team has been selected, the Future State VSM results in a remarkably improved process with little clutter or waste.

Delivering the future

Next, a Value Stream Plan is created which details each new process in the Future State VSM, and the goals and objectives of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which should deliver these processes.

One Kaizen manager – Kaizen is Japanese, meaning 'change for the better' ►

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► is then appointed for each of the new processes. Kaizen teams – as few as two or three people per team, and as many as 10 – are then created to support each manager, and charged with designing the new SOP to deliver each of the Future State processes.

These teams review the current state SOP for each step of the process, identify and eliminate waste, and through extensive discussion create a Future State SOP. Depending on the complexity of the SOP, a Kaizen can take as little as a few hours or as long as a few months – but eventually a well-defined, Lean SOP will be developed for each process in the Future State VSM. These are then tested, reviewed, tweaked and revised until the Kaizen team is satisfied with the deliverables. With a very high bias on action, the team motto during this entire process is: “Do not let perfect get in the way of better.”

For most companies, this will be the first time that SOPs have been designed mostly by ‘the field’ – the frontline staff – as opposed to the ‘ivory tower’ of management, and the resulting level of employee empowerment and buy-in is usually exceptional. The long-term execution of these SOPs then improves dramatically as a result of this empowerment dynamic.

Once all Kaizens have been tested and approved, a Report Out is scheduled for final approval from the executive management team, in which each new, Lean SOP is assessed for financial, legal, cultural and ethical compliance with company standards. Once they have been approved – with tweaking if need be – a Lean rollout of each is systematically designed and launched. Incomplete Kaizens continue to evolve and are launched as they are approved.

Living proof

Having identified a need to improve sales productivity and sales associate retention levels at the outset of the Lean project in December 2011, Healthtrax systematically implemented the full VSM/Kaizen process across its full network of 18 clubs. By April 2013, the following results had been achieved:

- Double digit improvement in sales closing rates
- Double digit improvement in the growth of sales
- Double digit improvement in sales productivity and costs (measured as the total sales hours per new club membership sold)
- Enhanced guest/new member point of sale experience, resulting in higher referral rates

▲ At Healthtrax, the Lean project has led to an improved induction process

- Improved new member induction process, resulting in improved retention
- Improved employee morale due to simplified and more user-friendly sales procedures and higher earnings through improved productivity
- A culture shift, which has developed a management team with a keen critical eye for lean improvement in all areas

At Healthtrax Fitness and Wellness’ most recent board meeting, CEO Ken Navarro summed up the company’s Lean sales journey to date: “At this point, the results we have experienced with Lean have far exceeded our most optimistic expectations. We will continue to use Lean business principles to help improve productivity in all other areas of our operation.” ●

Doug Werner is a fitness industry veteran with over 30 years’ club operations and equipment sales management experience, for the likes of Town Sports International and Nautilus. He is currently vice president of lean sales management for Healthtrax Fitness and Wellness in the US.
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SCOPING & INVESTIGATION

In part one of a nine-part series detailing Alliance Leisure's process for creating successful public leisure facilities, we see the importance of starting with a frank discussion, an imaginative vision and a sound feasibility study.

There are many examples of new and architecturally impressive leisure centres to be found around the UK, yet that fact remains that over two-thirds of facilities are more than 20 years old, having been built with a 25-year lifecycle in mind. That suggests a lot of stock in urgent need of renewal and revival.

Alliance Leisure has been in the business of breathing new life into flagging, and often failing, sport and leisure facilities for the past 15 years. It offers a turnkey procurement and development service for local authorities and leisure trusts, taking on all the risk, with no upfront fees for councils in the all-important scoping and planning stages.

With access to a loyal stream of City funders, Alliance Leisure has so

far invested over £60m into the public portfolio and completed over 100 projects. In many of these cases, there's been no need for any capital outlay on the part of the client, and the end result can be a cost-neutral development delivered in half the time of a project taken through a more traditional route.

"We're not in the business of producing expensive, signature buildings. In these times of huge pressures on public funds, clients should not be spending any more than they need



▲ Evolution Extreme captures a hard-to-reach market

to," says Alliance Leisure's commercial director, Paul Cluett.

"Also, there's no point in investing in a new facility that fails to engage 89 per cent of the local population."

Detailed analysis

The foundations for success are laid early in the Alliance Leisure-client relationship, starting with a rigorous process to scope and test out a project's commercial viability and sustainability in the community before any decisions to go further. Cluett says that, at this early stage, clients must be prepared to face a potentially difficult process.

"We're not afraid to challenge our clients. They may want to knock down an old sports centre and build a brand new one. If there's a more economical way of doing things that delivers higher value to the community, that's what we'll push for.

"For example, a client might ask for a 100-station gym. But then we commission a latent demand report from Leisure Database, and the results show they really only need 60 stations. That's a lot of money to be saved on equipment, and a lot of space that can be put to better use," says Cluett.

"We also like to challenge their perceptions of what a sport and leisure

CASE STUDY – Deeside Leisure Centre, North Wales

The regeneration of Deeside Leisure Centre, in a four-year strategic collaboration between Flintshire County Council (FCC) and Alliance Leisure, shows what can be achieved with a new standard of public-private partnership.

The council originally planned to demolish and rebuild the underutilised centre at a cost of £18m. Working with Alliance Leisure and its access to funding paved the way for a regeneration project that cost only £6m and required no capital outlay by the authority. Each project phase was made affordable based on detailed feasibility and business planning.

Phase one (Nov 2010) created six 5-a-side 3G turf football pitches, attracting over 60,000 visits since opening, and a regular monthly income of £8,000.

Phase Two (Aug 2011) saw the opening of a fitness facility and tanning suite. Both facilities generate a combined income of £35,000 per month and total income since opening has risen by 92 per cent.

In Phase Three (Jan 2012), the centre opened the first Welsh public day spa, and also launched the UK's largest extreme sports centre. Evolution Extreme caters for climbers, BMX, skateboards, scooters and inline skaters, and attracts 2,000 visits a week, largely from the hard-to-reach demographic of young teenage boys.

Julia Goddard, Alliance Leisure's business development manager, adds: "Deeside shows how a fantastic opportunity can arise from a rundown and costly facility. Through creative design the centre now boasts modern facilities to engage its local community."



▲ Alliance Leisure's first-stage approach is to really challenge new clients about what elements they need in a new leisure facility

“ There's no point investing in a new facility that fails to engage 89 per cent of the community ”

centre is and can be – it's all about recognising the art of the possible.”

Finding 'the possible' in a project first involves an exhaustive process of detailed demographic analysis, business planning and stakeholder engagement.

Alongside detailed discussions with the client, starting a meaningful conversation with the local community is vital, says Cluett. “We rely heavily on local knowledge and stakeholder engagement. Local member groups and councillors are really the earpieces to the wider community.”

Before a client decides to commit any further, there'll also be a fairly clear prediction of future costs. “We take a highly diagnostic approach, and “put our money where our mouth is” to back the achievement of the feasibility study targets,” says Cluett.

Ground-breaking model

This unique model has been successful in past Alliance Leisure projects because it

essentially turns the procurement process on its head.

By the more traditional route, a council may pay high fees in the pre-contract phase. If it goes ahead, there will undoubtedly be a much slower delivery process, with unpredictable and rising costs, and with all the risks of construction borne solely by the local authority.

Still working within council and EU regulations and the Development Framework, the Alliance Leisure process can eliminate the fear of the unknown from the outset, while at the same time bridging the funding and skills gap.

Its early-stage analysis can also produce fresh and exciting ideas, generated by a team that's dedicated to researching new trends. “For example, few may have predicted the huge rise in popularity of functional fitness and what



▲ Deeside now has a spa to rival private spa facilities

that means in terms of requirements on the gym floor, says Cluett

“Also, local authority fitness income is being challenged with the rise of private sector budget clubs, so we must find commercially-viable concepts that refresh the leisure offer, ensure wider community engagement, address the ageing population and promote social cohesion,” he says.

Alliance Leisure clients can be sure that once the scoping and investigation phase is complete, says Cluett, they are on the path to a truly sustainable and inspirational project. ●

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THE POP-UP PROPOSITION

Kate Cracknell and Magali Robathan report on the emergence of the 'pop-up' leisure experience, and what opportunities this trend might present to the fitness industry

The pop-up concept is thriving – a new generation of time-limited operations that use existing or temporary locations to launch low-risk, often highly creative leisure experiences, from hotels to spas, restaurants to cinemas, parks to shops (see *Leisure Management* issue 2 2013, p42).

As Liz Terry, editor of *Leisure Management*, outlined in her editor's letter in that issue (issue 2 2013, p3): "Designing, funding, building and running facilities is an expensive undertaking, but because the majority of people's out-of-home leisure activity has traditionally taken place in and around some kind of facility, operators have always had to bear the costs associated with this.

"But they're facing new competition from operations seeking to profit by operating equivalent experiences for customers, while bearing none of the costs associated with facility operations – and they're doing it in innovative ways."

The traditional facility-based model has already been challenged in the fitness sector by outdoor boot camps, virtual group exercise classes on the internet, fitness apps. And now pop-ups are starting to enter this same territory.

But rather than seeing this as a threat, the pop-up concept in fact offers fitness operators an exciting opportunity – a cost-effective way to expand their reach and test out new markets. Here's a selection of initiatives that illustrate how to tap into this hot new trend.

TESTING THE WATERS

Any health clubs operator weighing up the pros and cons of developing a spa offering could, rather than immediately building a costly permanent offering, instead test the waters with a pop-up offering. This could be done either on-site at the club or in a standalone location nearby, taking advantage of the

lower set-up costs to assess the viability of such an offering in the longer term.

Barking Bathhouse is a great example of this – a pop-up spa which proved so popular that a permanent offering is now being developed. Set up in London in the summer of 2012, it was created by design practice Something & Son and was open for 12 weeks from July



Top: Barking Bathhouse offered a breezy relaxation yard
Middle: The 'gravel pit' – an urban take on the beach
Bottom: Post-treatment, guests could enjoy the organic bar

- 2012. Situated in a car park, it resembled a giant beach hut from the outside. Inside, it had a shingle beach where spa-goers could sunbathe, as well as three treatment rooms, a wood-fired sauna, ice room, relaxation yard and organic bar. Treatments were affordable and it became highly popular, hosting everything from yoga events to comedy nights.

"Setting up a pop-up spa enabled us to be more innovative than if we were running a permanent spa," says Paul Smyth, founder of Something & Son. "We didn't have the pressure a permanent spa might have, so we could try out new ideas and focus on getting people in and having a great time. We learned what worked and what didn't."

Although the pop-up was dismantled in October 2012, Something & Son transformed four rooms at the Barking Learning Centre into treatment rooms so the concept could continue in winter.

The £230,000 pop-up spa was funded by the local council and the Outer London Fund, created by London mayor Boris Johnson to support the outer London boroughs during the Olympics; a further £300,000 is now being invested in a permanent bathhouse. Something & Son is also talking to both Bristol and Brighton councils about recreating the concept there.

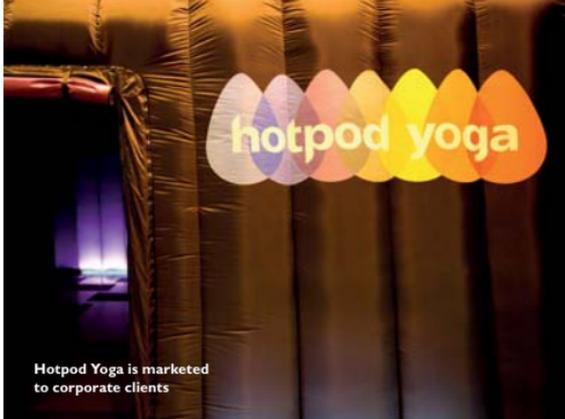
An interview with the founders of Barking Bathhouse ran in *Leisure Management* issue 2 2013, p54.

CORPORATE OFFERING

Hotpod Yoga uses the pop-up format to target the corporate market – something other fitness operators might also consider to extend their reach into this market.

The company offers hot yoga classes in its own pop-up inflatable studios – the eponymous 'pods' – which it uses to provide an in-office offering. It focuses on Vinyasa flow yoga, with the heat (around 38 degrees) facilitating "maximum benefits in a relatively short time" – perfect for office lunch hours.

The pod – which includes heating, music and lighting systems – is designed to take people out of the office environment the moment they walk



Hotpod Yoga is marketed to corporate clients



The pop-up pods are quickly inflated and deflated

through the door. Any office that signs up is given its own pod and agrees a class timetable with Hotpod Yoga: they can offer as many classes as they like, with Hotpod also very flexible in terms of class times. Instructors then come in, inflate the pop-up "in a matter of seconds", heat it and sign participants in for a one-hour class, before deflating it, tidying up and putting it back into storage at the office. The pod measures 8m x 9m when erect, and just under 3m high, with a capacity of 20 people.

Although Hotpod Yoga services its own clients in London and the M4 corridor, outside of this the concept can be franchised, to cater either for corporates or the general public.

JOIN THE COOL CLUB

The novelty of the pop-up format – with its lack of adherence to traditional formats or venues, its lack of fixed abode, and its flexibility to morph in response to demand – gives these offerings an element of coolness and exclusivity.

London-based pop-up gym Move, founded by AJ O'Neil, absolutely embodies this. Its growing number of followers are brought together as a buzzing community whose excitement for working out is kept alive through new class formats and locations – including rooftops, piazzas and gardens.

With no fixed address and no membership contract (prices start at £10 per class), social media is used to great effect: via irreverent, fun and enthusiastic Facebook and Twitter posts, followers can keep track of the latest classes – and the locations for those classes. Not only that, but participants' feedback is actively sought regarding where and how they'd like to Move.

"The novelty of the pop-up format, with its lack of adherence to traditional formats or venues, gives these offerings an element of coolness and exclusivity"



Above and right: Fitness Freak organised its first two-day pop-up event in London in June. It took place in the vaults beneath Waterloo train station



All classes are designed to be great fun, with half of the timetable involving dance and dance fitness, including workshops with cast members of West End shows such as Chicago and Dirty Dancing. But as Move's Facebook feed clarifies, it's not all about dancing: "Dancers aren't the only people with moves – we're inviting some of London's most exciting combat fitness instructors to come and show our Movers how to get fighting fit. What classes do you guys want to try the most?"

There's a real club feel – a sense of being part of the 'in' crowd, allowed to work out in unusual locations with a focus on interaction and fun. "We have a vision of bringing fitness into inspiring environments, and opening it up to a wider public," says O'Neil.

Meanwhile, in an initiative reminiscent of Lunch Beat – the lunchtime clubbing sessions in Stockholm designed to get workers active during their lunch break – class finding and booking website

Fitness Freak organised its first pop-up event in London in June.

Run in collaboration with TimeOut, the event – which took place in the vaults beneath Waterloo train station – comprised four one-hour rave classes over two days, complete with live DJ and glowsticks for every participant. The high-energy cardio and conditioning sessions were set to 90s dance classics, with multiple instructors getting the crowd fired up.

All sessions sold out, at a cost of £13.85 per class including booking fee, with a total of 650 people attending across the two days. The event has now been followed up with £10, drop-in RAVE classes at Gymbox Bank, exclusively for Fitness Freak users, with further pop-up events planned.

Running such events need not be overly expensive, but executed and marketed well they could offer operators a great chance to build a sense of 'club' among members. ●

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ATTENTION RETENTION

Think retention was bad before? Just look at what's happening now, says Dr Paul Bedford

The most recent research on UK health club member retention reveals a worrying decline in an already unsatisfactory situation – namely the industry's ability to retain members.

The first study of this type was conducted as part of the FIA's (now ukactive) *Winning the Retention Battle* series, conducted by Dr Melvyn Hillsdon back in 2002. At that time, from a sample of just over 70,000 members, 60 per cent retained membership for 12 months. The subsequent national study in 2008, involving 293,000 members, revealed that 66 per cent of members had retained their membership for 12 months.

But the latest figures have fallen back down – and beyond. Based on 342,759 member records and covering the four-year period from 2009–2012, *The National Retention Report* (see information panel, p66) indicates that only 52 per cent of members are maintaining membership at their club for 12 months.

Although comparing data from different samples is not the most academic research approach, nevertheless the findings allow us to draw some broad conclusions, as well as allowing us to identify some of the characteristics that defined the market then and now, helping us understand where the key changes have been taking place.

Scores on the doors

Our report shows that 51.9 per cent of members retain membership for at least 12 months; 24.4 per cent are still there after 24 months; 14.1 per cent survive to 36 months; and only 10.4 per cent are members to 48 months (see Figure 1).

Figure 2 (see p64) gives an overview of retention rates for specific periods of

Many clubs focus on driving secondary spend such as PT, even though the big money still lies in membership fees

ALL PHOTOS © SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ANDREK



The best performing clubs hold on to their members for 23.5 months more, on average, than the worst performing sites

membership, providing a comparison of our 2013 report with the findings from 2002 and 2008. You can see that at each period, the 2013 results are worse than previous years. In 2002 and 2008, more than six out of 10 members retained their membership for at least 12 months, compared to five out of 10 in 2013.

Within this, there are some interesting variances by age. The latest report identifies that members aged 16–24 years have a 12-month retention rate of 50 per cent compared to those aged over 55, 66 per cent of whom

stay for a year. By the end of the study period (48 months), only 5 per cent of the 16–24 group were still members, compared with 22 per cent of those over the age of 55.

Meanwhile, when data is analysed by contract length, 48 per cent of those on one-month agreements complete 12 months of membership, compared to 65 per cent of those on a 12-month contract. This lies at the heart of the difference in retention rates between the public and private sectors: private operators perform significantly better

than the public sector for the first 11 months, after which retention rates level out across the board.

Turning to attrition, in 2008 clubs lost members at an average rate of 35 members per thousand members per month. In this new study, they lost them at a rate of 55 per thousand members per month. That's a loss of an additional 240 members a year that need replacing.

When these figures are scaled up to a national level, the size of the problem really becomes clear. In the 2012 *State of the UK Fitness Industry Report*, produced by The Leisure Database Company, there were 7,601,114 health club members in the UK. If you extract the 2012 retention figures from *The National Retention Report*, this would equate to a loss of 3,952,579 members.

Many of these will, of course, have left one gym to join another – it's not currently possible to track that change (although this could be remedied were the industry to adopt a single, individual membership approach similar to National Insurance numbers, allowing us to track 'loss to industry' versus 'lost to competitor'). However, even acknowledging this, a figure of 3,952,579 annual lapsed is still an unacceptably high number.

Figure 1. Length of membership retention

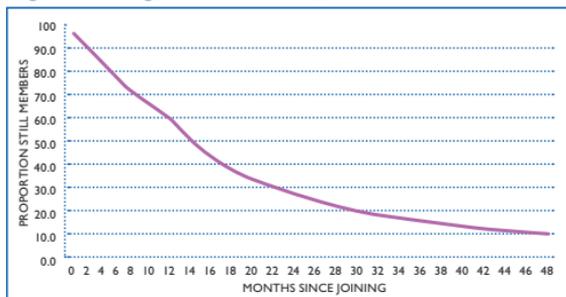




PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Older members are more loyal than younger members – 66 per cent of those aged over 55 maintain membership for a year

- ▶ Meanwhile, if we look at how long members stay, we can see a wide difference between the best and worst performers. Median length of membership is currently just 12.3 months. However, the worst performing clubs only manage to hold on to members for six months, whereas the best performing clubs keep them for an additional 23.5 months. Based on a club of 1,000 members, each paying £35 a month, that would equate to a difference in income of £595,000 between the best and worst performers.

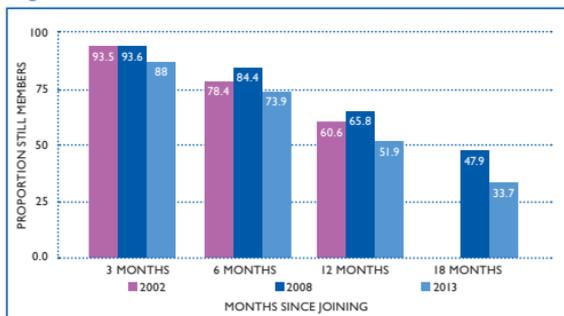
Customer profile

MOSAIC profiling is used to understand characteristics of households and the individuals living there. The essence of the system is that small areas which share similar housing, lifestyle, demographic and socio-economic features will show similar likelihood of using specific services (eg gyms).

If we review the demographics of the members in *The National Retention Report* sample using MOSAIC profiling, we can see that the health club industry currently attracts the majority of its members from just seven of the 15 MOSAIC groups. The report suggests the industry is dominated by the middle classes, failing to attract the highest or lowest income groups. Rural areas and older people are also under-represented.

This is true across all sectors. Indeed, while previous reports have shown

Figure 2. Overview of retention rate trends



that MOSAIC types differ by public and private sector, the new report suggests this is no longer the case, with types that were previously only seen in more expensive private sector clubs now being found equally in public sector facilities.

Perhaps most worrying in this is the fact that leisure facilities set up to provide opportunities for the least well-off do not seem to be attracting those groups sufficiently to represent their community.

So why is this happening? Certainly the past four years have seen some dramatic changes in the fitness offering being made available to the buying public.

First of all, the variety of offerings has diminished in the sector. Public sector sites have been rejuvenated by refits and

rebuilt, and the quality of the product offering improved.

Public sector operators have also been keen to employ sales approaches that mimic the private sector – the sort of approaches that previously set private operators apart – while still maintaining their community values. In short, they have upped their game.

Meanwhile the private sector has experienced challenging times. Health and fitness clubs have often had to maintain an ageing portfolio of facilities in the face of increased competition from the low-cost market – which has boomed in both private and public sectors – as well as a newly invigorated public sector. ▶

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Improved retention rates will have major impact on a club's bottom line

► Homogenous offering

In their book *Funky Business*, Kjell Nordström and Jonas Ridderstråle offer their thoughts on what they refer to as the 'surplus society': "The surplus society has a surplus of similar companies, employing similar people, with similar educational backgrounds, working in similar jobs, coming up with similar ideas, producing similar things, with similar prices and similar quality."

This could also be said of the fitness industry: we're seeing similar marketing strategies targeting the same types of members, who are being sold similar types of contracts with similar time periods, which provide access to similar facilities and similar classes and equipment. It's becoming increasingly difficult to separate public and private by facility design, content or contract type.

However, where facilities do have a clear USP, the financial rewards are huge, as can be seen in the best and worst performing clubs example above.

Of course, not all factors relating to retention are entirely under operators' control: the regulation of length of membership contracts has had an impact, for example, as have the challenges in the wider economy over the last four years.

However, in general, we really haven't been very imaginative in our offering, nor in the way we provide support to members, with a focus on PT over service. Larger health clubs – those offering gym, studios, tennis, swimming pools – will routinely generate membership



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ ANDRIS

METHODOLOGY

Published in 2013, *The National Retention Report (The White Report)* – produced by Dr Paul Bedford – offers a valuable insight into the retention and attrition rates of the UK health and fitness market over a four-year period. Not only is it the longest study of its type to date, it's also the most representative sample.

Data was sourced from 100 sites, with a breakdown – the proportion of chains, independents, trusts, local authority sites and privately managed public facilities – that mirrors the wider UK market.

Within these 100 sites, 38 different club operators were represented,

with a total of 729,389 individual member records supplied. After the data was cleaned for irregularities, 342,759 member records remained for analysis.

The measurement methodology from the previous reports (2002 and 2008) was once again used to provide continuity and allow some comparison, offering a definitive way of measuring retention and attrition, as well as enabling participating clubs to compare their own performance against industry benchmarks.

Membership data was extracted to include the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2012, thus providing a maximum of 48 months' follow-up.

revenues of £260k a month. F&B adds another £45–50k and PT just £18–20k. Yet while large amounts of time and effort are devoted to driving up secondary spend, many operators place little effort on improving retention, which is where the big money remains. ●

Paul Bedford PhD has worked in the fitness industry for more than 20 years. His business, Retention Guru, helps health club operators increase retention, reduce attrition and improve member loyalty.



Paul will be presenting on the findings of *The National Retention Report* at Leisure Industry Week this month – Tuesday 24 September, 1.30pm, in the LIW Keynote Theatre.

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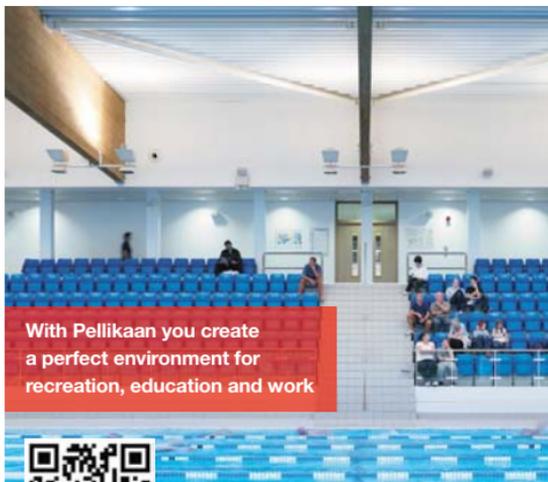
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PORTABLE HEALTH

In May of this year, Credit Suisse analysts advised their investment clients of “the next big thing”, and it wasn’t an innovative new drug or social network platform – it was wearable technology.

From the music business to hospitality, new technologies are disrupting a long list of industries. With Google Glass, I-Watch, the Nike Fuel Band and a host of other wearable technologies coming to market, one wonders how these could advance or hinder health club business models.

Current global revenues of US\$3–\$5bn are set to explode to more than US\$50bn in the area of wearable tech over the next three to five years – and some think that’s a conservative outlook.

Research firm ON World recently released its mobile health and wellness sensor reports which predicted that, in 2017, 515 million sensors for wearable, implantable or mobile health and fitness devices will be shipped globally, up from 107 million in 2012. ON World estimates that, by 2017, wearables will make up 80 per cent of the “mobile sensing

HOW COULD WEARABLE TECHNOLOGIES IMPACT THE HEALTH CLUB BUSINESS? BRYAN O’ROURKE SHARES HIS VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITIES OFFERED BY THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

health and fitness device” market. That figure includes smart watches, which it believes 48 per cent of consumers will primarily use for health and fitness (see <http://lei.sr?a=H8g5r>)

Meanwhile a new report from Juniper Research suggests that health and fitness devices will make up half of all wireless accessories shipped by 2018 (see <http://lei.sr?a=011h4>)

While these numbers may seem outrageous, consider this: CISCO forecasts that, by the end of 2013, the number of internet-connected mobile devices will actually exceed the human population. In Hong Kong alone, the average person has two smartphone devices, yet the modern smartphone trend emerged only five years ago. And in the US today, more than 35 million

people are using health tracking devices. It’s not unreasonable to think that this trend is just getting started.

A new healthcare model

So what does this mean for health clubs? The implications are unclear, but in a world where the cost of traditional ‘sick care’ is unsustainable, the paradigm of preventative and ‘do it yourself’ patient care is increasingly relevant. While traditionally the health club industry has largely catered to already fit enthusiasts, the opportunity to capture the much larger and growing sedentary market is being made more viable through these new wearable devices, with the proven idea that lifestyle management is the best means of driving down healthcare costs.

In his controversial book, *The Creative Destruction of Medicine: How the Digital Revolution Will Create Better Health Care*, Dr Eric Topol sets out a construct of the future of healthcare. According to Topol, putting important health data in patients’ hands is key to bringing about a digital health revolution.

During a recent speech, the doctor said: “There are more than a billion pre-diabetics on the planet, and we have warned them not to become diabetic. What if they could get their glucose every five minutes just for a week, and learn what are the foods and the lifestyle choices that are putting their pancreas into a high-gear mode we want to avoid? Wouldn’t that be a great education for that individual, because each one has his own environment, own nutrition?”

Topol is right: primary prevention is key to enhancing the quality of life for billions of people by avoiding chronic disease in the first place. Increasingly

The Quantified Self trend has evolved off the back of a surge in health monitoring devices





Google Glass: The new eyewear technology could have fitness applications

“WEARABLES WILL EXPAND THE WAYS IN WHICH TRAINERS INTERACT WITH MEMBERS, MOVING AWAY FROM COUNTING REPS AND TOWARDS COACHING”

convenient and inexpensive devices could be a key part of systems that keep people healthy by impacting on lifestyles.

Integrating technology

The DIY Health movement, known to some as the Quantified Self trend (see *HCM* April 13, p39), has evolved from the surge in new apps and devices actively being adopted by consumers keen on preventing, examining, improving, monitoring and managing their health. How health clubs could get involved in this shift is an important question.

The fitness industry has reached an inflection point where business models are going through increasing fragmentation as consumer needs become more distinct and business models are honed. The paradigm

created by rising healthcare costs will create more opportunities for clubs to deliver lifestyle management to clients.

UK operator Nuffield Health is a case in point. Its model represents a commercial bridge between traditional healthcare and primary prevention with assessments, programmes, measures and rewards centred on health outcomes. More business models like Nuffield will be appearing, and their reliance on technology as a key component of service delivery is likely. Indeed, as physical and digital worlds merge, new forms of wearables like Google Glass will lead to unforeseeable and interesting possibilities.

Wearables technologies – along with internet ubiquity and cloud-based software – will enable facilities to deliver wellness programmes and interact with,

track and motivate clients in new ways. It will likely change and expand the ways in which trainers interact with members, moving away from counting reps and towards coaching and advising clients, with a lot more behavioural data at hand.

Meanwhile, as governments and employers wrestle with rising costs associated with chronic disease, they will look for solutions that achieve health outcomes which avoid medical conditions – and the fitness industry could address that opportunity.

The recent Affordable Care Act, which goes into effect in the US in 2014 (see also p82), serves as evidence that policy must factor in primary prevention as part of the sick care equation. This approach by governments and employers will be ▶



Wearable technologies will enable forward-thinking health clubs to engage with their members in new and exciting ways

“THE SURGE IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES – PARTICULARLY WEARABLES – WILL CREATE NEW WAYS OF HELPING PEOPLE AVOID CHRONIC DISEASE”



ALL PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

In the US today, more than 35 million people are using health tracking devices

► a larger part of the cost reduction equation in the coming years.

Growth of competition

All that glitters is not gold, as the wearable trend will create risks. While these technologies will enable new business models for clubs that seek to service members 24/7, both inside and outside of their four walls, they could also usher in a new era of competition.

Apple has hired experts in sensors that monitor the human body from companies like AccuVein, C8 MediSensors and Senseonics. The electronics giant Samsung recently divulged that it's investing heavily in wearable computers, and revealed that it's even developing systems for stick-on patches to monitor health. The business opportunity created by prevention and technology is not going unnoticed.

In the end, the surge in new technologies – particularly wearables –

will create new ways of helping people improve their quality of life and avoid chronic disease. Industries and businesses that figure out how best to incorporate these tools in a systematic way, to provide outcomes for their clients, should flourish.

Will the health club industry be part of this equation? I think so. ●

Bryan O'Rourke is a health club industry expert, technologist, financier, shareholder and executive in several fitness companies. He

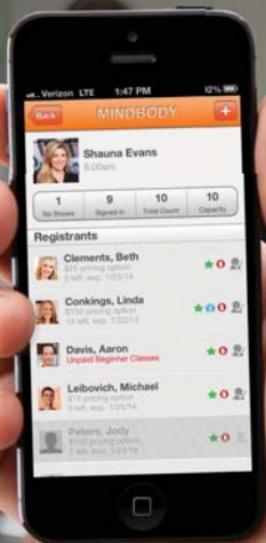


works for Fitmarc, which delivers Les Mills programmes to over 700 facilities in the US, and heads up the firms Integerus and Fitsono as CEO. He advises successful global brands, serves as a member of the GGFA Think Tank and is CEO of the Fitness Industry Technology Council (www.fit-c.org). He was also recently appointed to the ACE industry advisory panel.

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SHAPING UP



Avondale staff had to learn to react to each member on an individual basis

Losing weight remains a key reason why people join gyms. Kath Hudson looks at some of the innovative weight loss initiatives that are getting great results

AVONDALE HUB

EIGHTEEN months ago the leisure centre in Avondale, UK – run by leisure trust Life Leisure – was losing £250,000 a year, but local protest meant it couldn't be closed down. Pushed to come up with an alternative, Life Leisure MD Malcolm McPhail decided to turn it into a health hub and weight loss centre, investing £400,000 of the trust's money. "We chose to target non-gym goers by turning the usual offering on its head: no mirrors, no heavy weights," says McPhail. "We added many new programmes: using behaviour change techniques, for example, and accelerometers to track activity. We even installed an anti-gravity treadmill, allowing

clients to effectively reduce their body weight down to 20 per cent to lessen the impact on their joints while exercising.

"Beginner classes became the core of the offering and MYZONE was introduced: it rewards the effort people make, helping motivate less fit people to keep exercising. Members often have overweight families too, so a kids' activity area with reaction walls was included."

The staff, all qualified to Level 4, had to learn to react to each person on an individual basis: members needed a wide range of interventions and had different requirements for exercise. Many were too self-conscious to exercise in front of others, so portable barriers were brought in. Some were told they weren't ready for the gym yet and were given alternative exercise plans, including walks in the neighbourhood and chair-based exercises (many received an accelerometer to track progress). Those with a BMI under 30 were referred to mainstream programmes at other Life Leisure centres.

Previously the club had 500 members; now it has 1500, 80 per cent of whom had never been a gym member before. Added to this, the loss was reduced to £70,000 in the first year of operation and the centre is looking to break even this year.

Public Health Stockport is interested in the development and the team has been asked to set up a health hub franchise, making the concept available to other organisations. The centre is also part of ukactive's Research Institute study into the effectiveness of different physical activity interventions.



Beginner classes form the core of Avondale's offer



Before and after: On Vivaslim, people lost up to 3kg a month



The Diet Chef day hamper includes three meals and a snack

VIVASLIM

Vivaslim's nutrition and coaching software provides eating plans and online tools to keep members engaged during the process of changing their eating and lifestyle patterns and behaviours.

Officially launched earlier this year, the plan categorises the member's lifestyle based on their eating patterns – for example, identifying if someone

is a 'Night Time Nibbler' – and their stress patterns, with character types including 'Fast Pacer'.

Clubs can choose how to package and brand the programme, with Vivaslim providing the software; some include it in the membership; others offer it as a secondary revenue activity or incorporate it into their PT offering.

Constance Ruiz, president of Vivafit and Vivaslim, suggests it's most effective if clubs hire a qualified nutritionist or dietitian. When the package was first run across Vivafit's 45 clubs in Portugal, members were losing approximately 1.5kg a month; that increased to an average of 3kg once the nutritionist contact was introduced.

EVERYONE ACTIVE & DIET CHEF

Everyone Active recently launched the third-party Diet Chef system to its members, giving them discounted access to Diet Chef's healthy, calorie-counted meals.

People can sign up for one- to four-month packages. By entering personal details and weight loss goals, the dieter receives the suggested package to achieve these goals – either 1,200-calorie or 1,500-calorie a day hampers, including breakfast, lunch, dinner and a snack. All packages are designed to help change eating habits and keep the weight off.

"Diet Chef is a great system because it educates people in what constitutes a healthy, balanced meal," says Michelle

Bletso, group fitness development manager for Everyone Active. "It's not about sales or earning commission. We want to support members by recommending a reputable system."

In University of Hull research, only 7 per cent of those using Diet Chef withdrew after 12 weeks, compared to 41 per cent of those following a dietician-supported, self-directed plan.

"It's not about sales or earning commission. We want to support our members by recommending a reputable system"

► NUFFIELD NUTRITION

At Nuffield Health, nutritional therapists are on-hand to develop a diet and lifestyle plan to suit each client's lifestyle and body, involving identifying their unhealthy habits and giving them the tools to address these.

Henri McGourty, interim professional head of nutrition, explains: "In January, we relaunched our nutrition proposition. Everyone has different clinical requirements, so a bespoke and tailored diet plan is put together, including appropriate nutrients for the health benefit they are hoping to achieve and including foods they like."

Nutritional therapy is part of the premium Wellbeing Membership (£109 a month, available at selected sites), which includes four 30-minute expert 'touchpoints' a year – with nutritionists, for example, but also covering services such as physiotherapy, PT and physiology. These experts are also available for standard members to access at an extra cost. "Members are experiencing significant changes to their health. This is particularly apparent when doing follow-up health MOTs," says nutritional therapist Natalie Braithwaite.

Health improvements include weight loss, increased energy levels, improved sleep, reduction in stress levels, better concentration and lower cholesterol. Going forward, Nuffield Health will focus on embedding and consolidating the nutrition service at the 19 Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing Centres around the country.



In Carlisle, Momenta has seen a retention rate of 75 per cent at 12 weeks

"We're growing an in-house team of dedicated health coaches who can apply the skills they learn to support all our customers"

MOMENTA

Developed by a team of experts in the fields of psychology, nutrition and physiology, Momenta has distilled the science of weight management into 12 interactive, classroom-based sessions.

It was first developed in 2010 and was piloted for two years. Now it's being delivered across the UK by a variety of organisations including Carlisle Leisure (CLL), which has seen an average retention rate of 75 per cent at 12 weeks of the programme at the two centres where Momenta is offered.

At CLL, members pay an initial fee to receive on- and off-line resources and then attend the weekly classes free of charge. Non-members can simply pay as they go to take part.

As well as weight and attendance, Momenta uses validated questionnaires to capture a range of other outcome data, including changes in anxiety, depression and self-esteem, nutritional choices and levels of physical activity. This is enabling CLL to attract funding from various sources including corporate and public health.

Andy King, MD at CLL, says: "The quality of the programme and outcome data shows we're now able to offer a clinically effective weight management programme to anyone in Carlisle. We're also growing an in-house team of dedicated health coaches who can apply the skills they learn in Momenta to support all our customers."

IVERBRIDGE INITIATIVE

Independent club Iverbridge Health Club in Wakefield offers a kickstart plan to all new members to help with weight loss. Costing £50 on top of the membership, members are given a 28-day low fat healthy eating plan and four one-hour sessions with a PT. They're expected to do a further two sessions each week on their own, replicating what they do with the PT.

At the start and end of the month they have their weight, waist and hip size measured, as well as BMI and resting heart rate. The average weight loss is 8.5lbs per person and a combined 4.5 inches around waist and hip.

For the second month, members are offered a 50 per cent discount on PT and small group training; take-up is 48 per cent. At the end of the second month, they're given a fitness test to show how their strength and stamina has improved. "We give them the formula to carry on and get results," says owner Richard Hill. "We haven't lost a member since we opened three years ago, unless they became ill, pregnant or moved away." ►

"We give them the formula to carry on and get results. We haven't lost a member since we opened three years ago"



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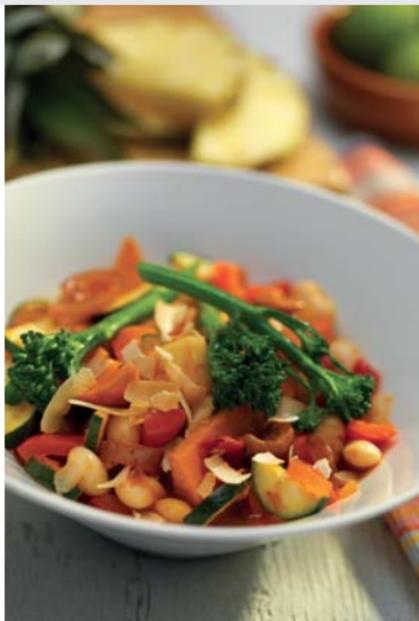
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David Lloyd Leisure launched DLicious, a new healthy menu, at its clubs in September 2012



▶ DLL LOSE & SHAPE-UP

Developed by a team of nutritionists and fitness professionals, David Lloyd Leisure's Lose & Shape Up programme takes a whole body approach. As well as weekly group exercise classes, cardio and resistance training and PT advice, the programme offers a weekly weigh-in and group support, a 12-week menu plan and online support.

Participants learn about healthy eating, from portion sizes to regulating insulin levels, plus advice on eating out, choices of fat, proteins and carbohydrates and what to eat before and after exercise.

Weekly meal plans, shopping lists, exercises and a progress tracker are available online.

On the January 2013 course, 800 members followed the programme, losing a combined total of 5,000lbs.

The top losers shed 20 per cent of their body weight.

In September 2012, DLL also launched a new healthy menu – DLicious – at its clubs, along with a new delicatessen range for juniors.

Lose & Shape Up teaches participants about healthy eating, from portion sizes and regulating insulin to guidance on eating out

WEIGHTPLAN FOR PT

Weightplan's new Gym Training app launched for iPhone and iPad last month, combining workout plans, exercise tuition and nutrition know-how. Users choose muscle gain, weight loss or weight management goals and are given daily calorie targets: calories to burn off at the gym and calories to consume.

Weightplan provides users with daily calorie targets – calories to burn at the gym and calories to consume – based on their goals

There's a food diary, meal plans and a large food search database covering all major supermarkets and restaurants. From an exercise perspective, there's an activity diary to log daily activities and view calories burned, pre-installed exercises and workouts to follow, and results/progression tracking including body weight and measurements.

At the end of this month, the company will release an accompanying PT app. PTs will be able to record clients' personal data and exercise programmes and provide them with the option of a nutrition plan to support their exercise programme. ●

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Studio equipment



RumbleRoller easy-clean massage roller

The RumbleRoller from PhysioSupplies is a massage roller for studios, created to be strong, tear-resistant and to retain its shape. The surface has firm but flexible bumps at less than 2 inches apart to knead the body, stretching soft tissue in multiple directions. The roller has a smooth, non-porous, latex-free surface which is waterproof and which repels dirt, with anti-microbial additive.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS

Physio Supplies



Align-Pilates studio range now on display

Align-Pilates is a UK-based pilates apparatus and studio equipment brand with a new studio showroom in Worcestershire. The range is designed to combine high quality components with innovative design to create a flexible and adaptable pilates studio offering. Align-Pilates is also designed to be intuitive to use and adjust, with representatives available to set up and demonstrate the equipment on-site.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORDS

Pilates-Mad

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The Stability Barre for studio work

Merrithew has introduced its adjustable Stability Barre for group or one-to-one studio sessions. Designed to be easily adjusted to a variety of heights, it's available in three lengths – 6ft, 8ft and 12ft – to accommodate various studio sizes and needs. The equipment is available in grey or white and has a weighted circular base to add stability, along with a non-skid grip. The barre is free-standing, requires no wall mounting and can be removed from the supports when not in use for storage.



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

Merrithew



Loumet Medicine Balls launch in the UK

Loumet Medicine Balls are now available for UK studios. The balls are durable, air-filled rubber medicine balls that bounce and float, and are designed not to split or cause damage when dropped on hard surfaces, including wooden flooring. Available from Jordan, the Loumet range weighs between 1kg and 6kg, and are designed for use in hour-long studio classes. The semi-bouncing balls can be thrown, caught, slammed on the floor, thrown against walls or med ball rebounders, held for functional exercises for the core, upper and lower body, or used for plyometrics.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD Jordan

One Leisure choose Jordan Fitness for new leisure centre

Functional fitness specialist helps transform the client offer at St Ives site

The new Impressions Fitness Suite at One Leisure St Ives, Cambridgeshire, managed by Huntingdonshire District Council, opened its redeveloped gym to the public on 18th May 2013. One of five "One Leisure" sites across the county, in Huntingdon, Ramsey, Sawtry, St Ives and St Neots, they provide a wide variety of sports and leisure activities for all ages and interests.

Functional fitness specialists, Jordan Fitness, were selected as One Leisure's preferred freeweights and accessories equipment supplier for the launch of their newest facility. The complete leisure complex includes a state-of-the-art gym, studios, crèche, tenpin bowling, swimming pool, café and bar, and a day spa with treatments rooms.

With 2 million people visiting the One Leisure facilities last year, the redevelopment of the facilities has resulted in a gym three times the

The gym now offers a large range of free weights

previous size and enables the club to increase their membership base to over 3,000. The new facility is open to all ages from 14 to 80 years and over. It also offers flexible membership options with no contracts in addition to full use of any of their five sites in the region.

Matthew Leadbitter, account manager at Jordan Fitness says, "One Leisure provides an excellent service to the local community, which aims to promote a healthy population across the region. Jordan Fitness is delighted to have been chosen to supply the functional freeweights and accessories for this site and look forward to continuing to support the Council in the future".

Jordan Fitness has supplied a wide range of functional fitness equipment

to the site, including an Olympic lifting platform, sports mats and hanging rack, dumbbell racks, studio barbell sets, medicine ball sets, storage cages, and a range of kettlebells and dumbbells.

Louise Silver, operations manager at the Impressions Fitness Suites at One Leisure says, "Through a rigorous tender process and after careful consideration, Jordan Fitness were selected due to their fantastic customer consultation process, coupled with their reputation for providing outstanding free weights equipment. One Leisure strives to provide customers with an excellent level of service and we are extremely happy with our choice of supplier."

For more information on One Leisure visit www.oneleisure.net

ABOUT JORDAN FITNESS

Jordan Fitness specialise in the design, manufacture and supply of commercial quality free weights, flooring and studio equipment to trade and retail clients across the UK, Europe and USA. Jordan Fitness is also an approved distributor for the LifeLine USA and Alpha Strong brands.

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One Leisure's new gym is now three times larger than the former one



LIFESTYLE MEDICINE



The Institute of Lifestyle Medicine in the US aims to reduce lifestyle-related diseases by training clinicians in how to prescribe exercise to patients.

Founder and director Edward Phillips talks to Julie Cramer about the institute, and why health clubs should be involved with the health system



Institute founder and director Edward Phillips

Q What is lifestyle medicine?

The whole field is about using lifestyle interventions, such as diet and exercise, as a therapeutic and preventative approach to common ailments such as heart disease, obesity and cancer. As a rehabilitation specialist, I'm particularly focused on using exercise for whatever ails you: whether you've lost a leg, had a stroke or hit your head, we're convinced exercise will help you feel better.

But it's not just about exercise – it's how you sleep, if you smoke or drink, what you eat. All these things combined are key factors in lifestyle medicine.

Q How did the institute come to be launched?

I'm a practising physician with a background in rehabilitation, and I started writing about these things in 1999. By 2005, we'd launched an online programme from Harvard Medical

School called Lifestyle Medicine for Weight Management. That course has been completed by over 2,000 clinicians around the world, from 115 countries.

Then, in 2006, we went to India to deliver a lifestyle medicine course to clinicians in four cities. Recognising the global interest in, and need for, our course, we decided to set up an institute devoted to the topic. The Institute of Lifestyle Medicine was born, based at Harvard Medical School in Boston, US, within the Joslin Diabetes Center.

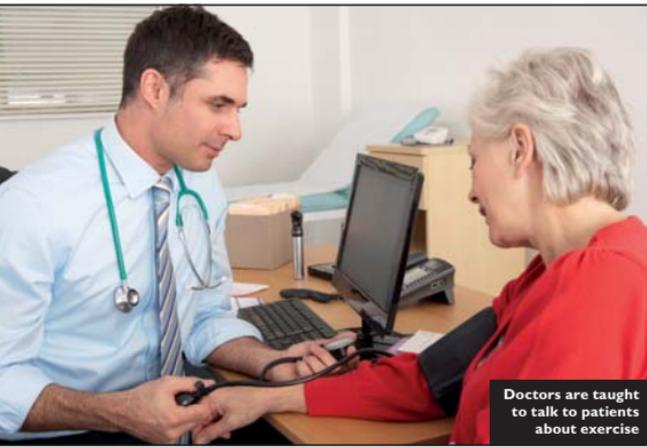
Q What does your work involve?

Our main goal is to retrofit physicians with the knowledge that's so important now, but that they never learned in med school. Highest on the list is teaching them about exercise, followed by motivation through health coaching, as well as improving their knowledge of lifestyle dangers such as stress.

We run a number of training courses and offer, among many other things, two main conferences a year, which attract delegates from all over the world.

Q Does that mean more recently qualified doctors are better equipped to tackle lifestyle diseases?

Actually it's still not well covered by medical schools, if at all. There was a study done in the UK recently, in which over 30 medical schools were asked



Doctors are taught to talk to patients about exercise

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The WHO predicts that, by 2020, two-thirds of illness globally will be the direct result of lifestyle choices

about their teaching on exercise and physical activity. There was a high response rate, but while all of the schools thought it was a good idea, the overwhelming answer was "but sorry, we just don't do it". There's now a move to undertake a similar kind of survey in the US and Canada.

"If you change people's behaviour even 2 per cent, that's tens of billions of dollars saved in healthcare costs each year"

Q What's the cost of doing nothing?

In the US, we're touching almost US\$3trn a year in terms of healthcare spending, and that's predicted to go up to US\$4.5trn by 2019.

The cost of doing nothing is quite simply unsustainable. The World

Health Organisation predicts that, by 2020 – which is really not that far away – two-thirds of illness worldwide will be the result of our lifestyle choices. On the plus side, if two-thirds of illness is as a result of our behaviour, that means there are opportunities out there to make big improvements to our health.

We're not talking about all-or-nothing change – that's a trap many fall into. People don't need to suddenly run marathons. It's about starting with a

10-minute walk at lunch. If you change people's behaviour even 2 per cent, that's tens of billions of dollars saved in healthcare costs each year.

Q What do you teach doctors?

Firstly, we expect all doctors to be physically active during our courses, so we put on exercise sessions such as Zumba (I can tell you most doctors have never tried Zumba!), tai chi and yoga.

In one workshop they get assessed themselves, which might involve them doing push-ups or planks. It's often a really good wake-up call for them.

Next, we teach them how to assess their patients and start to talk to them ▶



If doctors can gain basic health coaching skills, they may better identify which patients are ready for a gym referral

- ▶ about exercise, and whether to consider referring patients to a medical fitness club or a health club.

We talk to doctors about introducing Physical Activity Vital Signs – a system of asking patients how often in the past week they've done some moderate exercise, and for how long at a time.

Finally, we teach them how to start to influence behaviours by using coaching techniques like motivational interviewing. We're not saying doctors should become health coaches, but if they can recognise a patient's readiness to change, they'll know the right time to refer them on to a fitness facility.

Q What kind of reactions do you get from delegates?

We get all levels of response, right up to doctors saying: 'I'm fed up with my usual practice, I'm stressed, my patients aren't getting any better, how can I start my own lifestyle centre?'

But the majority – and this is where the root of change will happen – say that, although they're not going to radically change their practices, they will start asking everyone about exercise now.

However, we have a saying in medicine: 'Don't take a temperature unless you want to treat a fever.' If

you've determined people are inactive, you have to do something about it.

Q That sounds like a cue for health clubs...

It is. The way doctors are getting paid in the US is shifting. Under the Affordable Care Act ('Obamacare'), they're going to be rewarded on the health outcomes of their patients [like QOF in the UK], and how they're able to improve specific

"Clubs that can reliably and credibly provide fitness to the full spectrum of patients will be sought as valuable allies"

metrics such as blood pressure and lipid levels. They'll be paid in part based on patient health outcomes instead of just fee-for-service, which means they're becoming more focused on keeping their patients healthy.

There's also a new and growing category of sports and exercise medicine physicians who know a lot more about exercise than regular doctors, and they will naturally be looking for health clubs to partner with.

Governments are also now much more aware of the financial cost of inactivity. In healthcare terms, an inactive

person in the US costs US\$1,500 more each year than an active one.

Under this system, health clubs that can reliably and credibly provide fitness to the full spectrum of patients will be sought out as valuable allies.

Q Can you give an example of good practice?

The Atlantic Coast Athletic Club in Charlottesville, Virginia, US. The owner started soliciting physicians in 2005 to get their patients to come into a '60-day, US\$60' programme. It's been really successful and now he's taking millions of dollars running a very popular Physician Referral Exercise Programme (PREP).

Q How do you see the future?

We need to initiate a new paradigm for promoting health and wellness. We've seen a century-long experiment in the US of treating patients with episodic, procedure-orientated, sickness-based care. This 'clinical trial' has failed, causing disease, bankruptcy and death.

To collectively leave a legacy and change policy, we must change the environment. In future, if you see your doctor, you must talk about exercise. ●

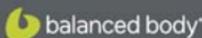
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SUPPLIER SHOWCASE

WE TAKE A LOOK AT RECENT PROJECTS FROM TECHNOGYM, MYZONE AND MATRIX FITNESS



The Dolphin Centre has had its first full refit in 20 years, which includes a gym extension

ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT

CLIENT: DOLPHIN CENTRE

SUPPLIER: TECHNOGYM

Run by Darlington Borough Council, the Dolphin Centre in Darlington, County Durham, UK, is a well-loved leisure centre that prides itself on family-friendly service and a welcoming atmosphere.

In February 2013, the centre invested in an extensive month-long modernisation project – its first full refit in 20 years. The makeover included a gym extension, with 75 new machines installed including over 20 VISIOWEB-enabled Technogym machines. These are supported by mywellness cloud business apps to support the centre's member retention efforts. These apps include Challenge, a user-friendly tool that allows operators to create, promote and manage gym challenges online.

A key component of the centre's new gym and membership package is the Get Results service, which gives customers access to regular one-to-one time with the gym team. The centre uses Challenge as a tool to support this service by encouraging instructors to recruit members in team challenges, building rapport, relationships and giving instructors a reason to maintain continuous interaction.

"The Challenge app is key to supporting retention, by encouraging ongoing interaction between instructors and

customers. It's also critical in keeping customers motivated and interested," says Lisa Soderman, business development manager at the centre.

"Challenges allow our instructors to set targets that bring customers closer to their goals identified through the Get Results service. This is great to keep them coming back to us, but also a fantastic selling tool because customers gain confidence in us and share their positive experience with the gym and Get Results service to the outside world."

A total of 280 people signed up to the first Challenge, with over 260 people continuing to participate in further Challenges.

To date, nearly 500 people have created mywellness cloud accounts, through which Challenge participants can track their progress – users and instructors can view their data, their position on the Challenge leaderboard and their overall activity levels online. This can be done through members' personal mywellness cloud accounts on the VISIOWEB screens, at home via www.mywellness.com, or on the go through the mywellness iPhone and Android mobile apps.

Soderman continues: "Feedback on the equipment and technology has been excellent. Our customers have a real sense of pride in their new facility, evidenced by our highest ever membership sales following the refurbishment."

To date, the Dolphin Centre has seen a 65 per cent increase in membership sales since the refit, and this year the club celebrated its highest ever sales performance for July.

For more information: www.technogym.com

CONNECT YOUR BUSINESS

A RANGE OF CONSOLES AND APPS TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS



VISIOWEB

Connect and motivate members



LED

Offer a user friendly interface



UNITY™



Personalise the user experience

Technogym consoles can be connected to mywellness cloud, where you can access a range of professional applications to help manage your members' lifestyle inside and outside the facility.



Profiling



Tailoring the Wellness experience

Profile

Programme prescription



Personalised programme assignment

Prescribe



Automatic programme assignment

Self

Engagement and motivation



Interactive and rewarding engagement

Challenge



Indoor & outdoor lifestyle management

Coach

Marketing ability



Improve loyalty & secondary revenue

Communicator

Equipment monitoring



Monitor equipment usage

Asset

VISIT US AT **LIW 2013, Stand H545 and H445**

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United Kingdom - TECHNOGYM UK Ltd. - Ph +44 1344 300236 - Fax +44 1344 300238 - E-mail: UK.info@technogym.com
OTHER COUNTRIES - TECHNOGYM SpA - Ph. +39 0547 650111 - Fax +39 0547 650591 - E-mail: info@technogym.com



REWARDING EFFORT

CLIENT: DE VERE VILLAGE URBAN RESORTS

SUPPLIER: MYZONE

De Vere operates 25 Village Urban Resorts, which each incorporate a Velocity Health & Fitness Club. With an average of 3,500 members per club, the group has some 86,000 members across the UK.

In January, following a successful trial at the group's Farnborough club, the operator introduced MYZONE fitness technology into all 25 group cycling studios. A further trial to integrate the system into the gyms and other fitness spaces at Solihull, Bournemouth and Elstree proved a great success, and the roll-out of the system across the remaining estate has just been completed.

MYZONE is a heart rate tracking system that rewards effort in all physical activity, whether the user is exercising in or outside of the club, through MEPs (MYZONE Effort Points). It takes the guesswork out of exercise, says Chris Southall, leisure director at De Vere Village Urban Resorts: "When asking members if their last workout was effective, the answer is normally related to how they feel. MYZONE eliminates that subjectivity, providing scientific feedback around heart rate training zones and the MEPs achieved.

"It helps users track progress against goals, with the points system focusing them on the process and motivating them to

achieve results and adhere to regular exercise. It's been a phenomenal success across our sites, because it's not about how long or how often members train, but how much effort they put in."

To use MYZONE, the member purchases a physical activity belt that streams live data when they're exercising in the facility. It also features a memory chip that can store up to 16 hours of data when the user is exercising outside the club. The activity belt is synchronised with the user's online personal profile, with exercise data – frequency of exercise, duration, MEPs, calorie expenditure and heart rate profiles – automatically and wirelessly uploaded to their profile when they come within range of the in-club MYZONE console.

There are also automatic uploads from integrated Body Composition Analysers in each Velocity Club to make it simple for users to monitor their health outcomes.

As well as motivating members, all this data helps instructors and PTs set targets and monitor performance, says Southall: "Our PTs can provide instant feedback after a session to show clients what they set out to do and what they achieved. The technology gives us more touchpoints with members and allows us to interact and engage with them on all levels."

Each club runs MYZONE challenges, with results posted on a league table. The challenges are based on effort, so are suitable for all members regardless of their fitness. The group has just run its first national MYZONE challenge across all sites to see which club could generate the most MEPs over two days. [For more information: www.myzone.org](http://www.myzone.org)



MYZONE provides scientific feedback around heart rate training zones



Buzz Gym is a budget model that offers members top of the range equipment

CREATING A BUZZ

CLIENT: BUZZ GYM

SUPPLIER: MATRIX

The founders of Buzz Gym in Reading, UK, approached Matrix Fitness Systems 12 months ago, seeking the supplier's help in creating a powerful member experience at their new gym. The brief was to incorporate innovative design and products to create engaging workout experiences that met the needs of members with a wide variety of abilities.

Adam Stowell, founder of Buzz Gym, began his career as a personal trainer at the age of 16. He has since conducted over 5,000 personal training sessions and is an Advanced Exercise specialist, holding numerous qualifications in nutrition and fitness. He has advised for *Woman and Home* magazine and *Metro*, and features regularly on local radio stations.

With one award-winning gym already under his belt – Advance Gym, also in Reading, and also equipped by Matrix – Stowell once again turned to Matrix to develop his latest club.

The 100-station Buzz Gym is based around the low-cost model, but with a focus on providing each member with the opportunity for a unique experience.

Stowell's vision was to create an innovative and visually impactful gym, ensuring members' needs were met with a combination of creative floor layout and the latest top of the range equipment.



Matrix's design ideas helped achieve the best layout

Alongside the cardio and resistance zones, the 910sq m (9,813sq ft) property features the area's largest free weights zone in the basement of the club. There's also a functional zone with the new Xcube training rig, cable machines, TRX frames and core free weight equipment such as medicine balls and kettlebells. Group Xcube classes are available.

Buzz Gym has also incorporated a range of plate-loaded equipment and heavier weights up to 60kg, ensuring all members – whether new to the gym or seasoned gym-goers – have access to all the equipment they might need for their workouts. All members are entitled to a custom-designed workout by the highly qualified staff in the club.

Design-wise, Buzz Gym has a warehouse look and feel, with crisp, bold colour designs along with bright ambient lighting. The gym holds regular Club Nights, with local DJs mixing up the sounds in the cardio zone. There's also a juke box in the free weights area.

Adam Rogers, senior sales manager at Matrix Fitness, says: "Matrix prides itself on its creative and innovative approach to the delivery of fitness solutions – our people, products and solutions demonstrate this creativity and innovation. We ensure customers are seen as individuals, and work with them to create bespoke packages that will support their individual needs, helping to develop and grow their businesses."

Stowell adds: "Our vision for Buzz Gym has always been to offer a unique, professional gym, and Matrix, with its exceptional creative design ideas, proved to be the perfect solution provider to help us achieve that vision."

For information: www.matrixfitness.co.uk

Take your club into the digital era with mywellness cloud

We take a look at Technogym's latest offering to the fitness industry

mywellness cloud is an online suite of business applications, that allows you as an operator to better understand and engage with your members and prospects. For your members, it is an online platform that allows them to access their exercise and lifestyle data anywhere, anytime.

People are increasingly investing in technology to be connected with their content on the go through mobile phones, tablets, smart TVs and PC platforms. This trend has a monumental impact on our industry: Wellness on the go represents a tremendous opportunity for all of us.

Wellness on the Go is the strategy behind Technogym's ecosystem, a platform that incorporates seven mywellness cloud business applications, fitness facilities, Technogym equipment

mywellness cloud
OPEN PLATFORM

Wellness on the Go is a key trend in the fitness industry

and members' lifestyles both inside and outside the gym.

Thanks to Technogym's extensive investment in research and development,

you now have seven ready-made business applications at your fingertips, allowing you to truly offer superior service to your members and prospects.

TECHNOGYM: MYWELLNESS CLOUD PROFESSIONAL APPLICATIONS

SELECT THE APPLICATIONS THAT BEST FIT YOUR BUSINESS



Profile is an innovative, evidence based application that offers your facility insights into what motivates each person to work out. Through extensive research conducted with the IULM University (Milan), Technogym developed the Aspiration Finder™ questionnaire, a unique tool for understanding end users and assessing their deepest motivation for exercising.



Prescribe allows operators to differentiate themselves through superior quality of service by creating truly personalised programmes for each user. Each bespoke programme is assigned to the user's mywellness cloud account and can be stored on the TGS key, a personal device that sets up the equipment and guides the user throughout the entire session. The results are automatically collected and used to monitor progress.



With the **Self** application users can create a training programme in seconds without supervision. The programme is selected from a library according to the user's real needs, goals, sport or aspirations.



Coach extends the operator's role into that of a personal coach. Operators can track and assess exercise, nutrition and lifestyle habits, create personalised action plans and interact with the user through the messaging portal to increase contact with users.



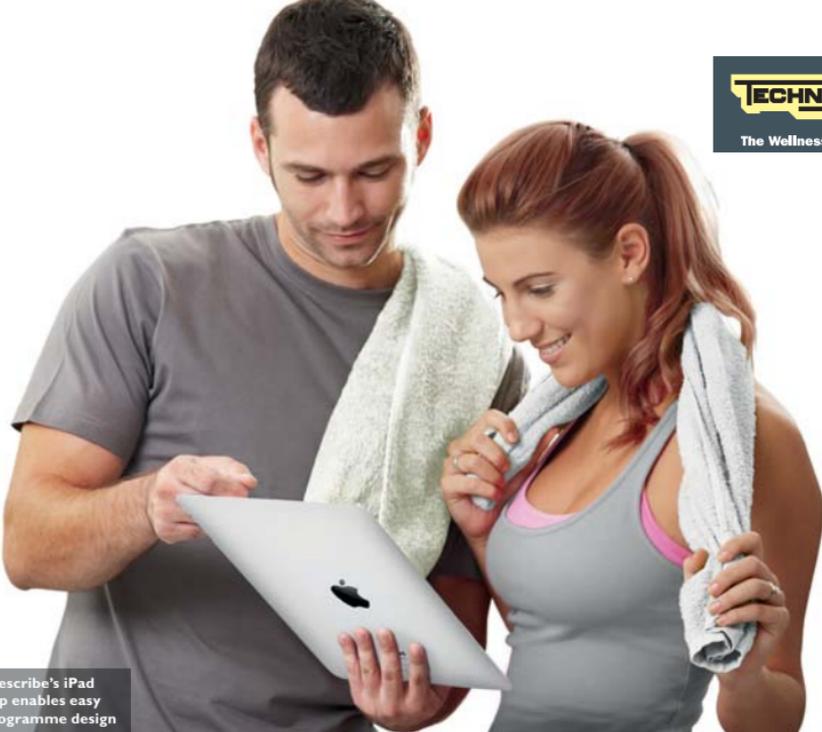
Create Challenges to motivate users and encourage interaction within the gym. Users can join your challenges via the web, their smartphone or directly from VISIOWEB or UNITY displays on the equipment and the VISIOSELF touch-screen kiosks. By improving their ranking to win challenges and prizes, they will spend more time in your facility.



Communicator can transform each VISIOWEB or UNITY display into a powerful marketing tool. Promote activities, products and services, promotions, co-marketing and surveys directly through the interactive touch screen display.



Asset remotely monitors equipment through VISIOWEB or UNITY displays. Have access to a dashboard of equipment usage and uptime 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Prescribe's iPad app enables easy programme design



Prescribe – App in focus

The future of exercise programming has arrived

Following 20 years of experience in creating end-user management and prescription solutions, Technogym introduces Prescribe, an online application for fitness facilities that allows instructors to quickly and easily create truly personalised training programmes for members. This is done via the revolutionary new iPad application – which allows quick and easy design of bespoke programmes with accompanying pictures or videos – or a gym PC, enabling facilities to retain a high level of personal interaction.

Bolsover District Council uses Prescribe to personalise their members' training experience

Bolsover District Council runs three sites, including Clowne Sports Centre, Creswell Leisure Centre and Frederick Gent Community Sports Centre. Having previously used Technogym's Wellness System at Clowne Sports Centre, the Council decided to embrace the increased flexibility and modular aspects

of Technogym's mywellness cloud online platform. The Council opted to start with the Technogym Self application, which allowed all the members to download safe and effective pre-loaded training programmes.

Once all members had created a mywellness cloud account, Bolsover District Council decided to add the Prescribe app to their programming solution. This enabled instructors to create personalised training programmes for individual members – an important feature for groups of users who are unfamiliar with exercise.

Exercise and fitness referral officer Arron Johnson says: "Prescribe is a great app in my opinion. It has allowed us to track our clients a lot more in order to achieve progress more efficiently. It's been very beneficial for the referred population, as many have never stepped into a gym before. Prescribe allows us to make it a lot easier for our clients to achieve their goals."

As part of their personal induction, new members create their own mywellness cloud account and are assessed for their fitness levels and goals. Their trainer then uses Prescribe to create a tailored programme, which they

can download and view directly from a VISIOSELF kiosk on each gym floor.

These programmes are stored on the members' personal mywellness account and can be accessed via the free mywellness app for smartphones, or via a device such as the TGS Key, which can be inserted into each gym machine to automatically upload the prescribed exercise settings and workout data – without the need for any manual input.

Arron says: "We have a big population of referral members who are classified as obese, and we often recommend low level interval training for them. The Prescribe app allows me to input an interval approach on the CV machines. Users just plug the key in the machine and off they go, with the programme loaded. This helps them avoid having to change intensity levels or speed every minute."

"Prescribe also allows me to see when the clients have been training, and message them instantly to motivate them. Through the messaging system, I can discuss their progress and tweak their programmes. It's like having a personal trainer at their side!" he adds.

Visit Technogym at LIW 2013 to find out more about the Prescribe App and how it can benefit your business. ●

Leisure Industry Week 2013



Laura Dagg previews the highlights of this month's LIW, which takes place at the Birmingham NEC on 24–26 September

Leisure Industry Week (LIW) returns to Birmingham NEC this month for what promises to be another inspirational and innovative showcase for the industry, with more than 250 exhibitors and over 100 hours of top quality education.

The Health & Fitness section of the show in particular is thriving after a fantastic outing in 2012, which saw the industry thoroughly embrace the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

LIW provides a platform for the leading fitness companies from across Europe to showcase their latest products and innovations to an audience of UK fitness and leisure professionals, all looking for the next big fitness phenomenon.

Exhibitor news

CYBEX International UK will return to the show on stand H555, and will launch its new Big Iron Glute Ham bench to the UK market. CYBEX will also be using the Bravo functional trainer to demonstrate its latest fitness programmes: the Bravo Energy Burn Series. Set up in a circuit format, athletes will take part in full circuit workouts throughout the show, using specific movement patterns and cardio blasts to burn calories and build strength.

Gladstone Health and Leisure will be debuting Communicate. This new software programme is designed to improve and drive digital interaction with new and potential clients, while also allowing businesses to measure the effectiveness of individual communication methods and analyse consumers' perceptions of their brands. Gladstone will be found at stand L110.

Keiser will be showcasing its Functional Trainer. This product offers incredible variety and versatility in a compact, space-saving design, with two adjustable arms to accommodate high and low training positions. Thanks to the intelligent and patented pneumatics of the machine, the user is offered a minimal impact workout with maximum results. Keiser will be on stand H360.

Les Mills' SMARTSTEP™ has been designed to help users get better results from the same Step workout. Thanks to non-slip risers that lock securely into place, it offers a strong and stable surface. It also uses 20 per cent less storage space than standard steps. Les Mills will also demonstrate SMARTBAR™, a barbell designed to deliver maximum results for users with consideration of the strain on hands and wrists, while at the same time allowing muscle isolation for an optimum

▲ Physical Company will launch Stroops' Resistance Band Systems

workout. Demonstrations will take place on stand H365.

Physical Company will launch two new products: the Resistance Band Systems from Stroops Performance, for sports-specific power, strength and agility training; and X-Lab, the customisable, modular functional training rig from Torque Fitness. Physical Company will be on stand H420, where eight demonstrations will take place each day.

Performance Health Systems will showcase three commercial Power Plate models on stand H565: the Power Plate pro7, Power Plate pro5 and Power Plate pro5 AIRdaptive High Performance model. The pro7 is the first commercial vibration training machine to feature an integrated LCD touch-screen with Functional Interactive Training (F.I.T) software, which acts as an inbuilt personal trainer, taking users through every stage of their workout. Expert advice will be available on post-natal vibration training.

Precor will showcase its new RFID 'Preva Tokens', the latest technology allowing Precor account users to log their achievements, goals and personal



Visitors will be invited to compete against each other in Power Hour

workouts easily. Using these small tokens removes the hassle of carrying a key or entering a pin number, with users able to log into their account using swipe technology. The Precor team will be available on stand H350.

Xn Leisure Solutions' software allows club members to book or purchase classes, courses and activities from your company via a personalised application adapted to each company's needs, which can be accessed via smartphone. Xn Leisure Solutions will be at stand LI40.

Other exhibitors in the Health & Fitness section of the show will include Technogym, Matrix Fitness, Escape, Life Fitness, Pavigym, Queenax, Ruff Tuff Stuffs, Pulse Fitness and Star Trac.

Pool & Spa

This section of the show will also deliver plenty of food for thought for health club operators. SkillsActive is set to launch RAPs, the Register of Aquatics Professionals, while the STA will run a new feature called the STA Swim Zone – a fully operational swimming pool on the show floor, with a full programme of education taking place in and around it.

► **Hassle-free: Precor will showcase its new RFID PrevaTokens at LIW 2013**

The national governing body for swimming, the ASA (Amateur Swimming Association), will present a keynote about the British Gas Swimfit initiative. This explores the benefits of viewing the pool as a 'studio full of water', and will look into similarities between gym space and pools for fitness solutions.

JC Leisure Solutions will also be exhibiting its latest pool, spa, sauna and steam equipment for commercial and private use. Other exhibitors in the Pool & Spa section include PS Pool Cleaners,

LIW 2013 – VISITOR INFORMATION

Venue: Hall 4, NEC, Birmingham, UK

Dates: 24–26 September 2013

Opening times:

Tues 24 September, 10.00am–5.00pm

Weds 25 September, 10.00am–5.00pm

Thurs 26 September, 10.00am–4.00pm

Registration: Pre-register for the show for free at www.liw.co.uk

Get involved using #LIW2013



- Aquamat, Certikin International, HeatPumps4Pools, Monkeys Inc, Plastica, RLSS and Zoggs UK.

Education

Each year, LIW delivers a schedule of free-to-attend education, offering insights into industry developments.

This year, the Keynote Theatre will feature updates from Les Mills' physiotherapist, research and operations manager Bryce Hastings, who will talk about group fitness and high-intensity training, and retention expert Dr Paul Bedford, who will outline the results of *The National Retention Report 2013*.

David Stalker, ukactive CEO, will also present the annual ukactive keynote, with other sessions including presentations by RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents), and SkillsActive on the launch of RAPs.

The educational content will also feature a dedicated programme for independent operators, designed by LIW and ukactive specifically with that group of fitness professionals in mind. The full education timetable is available to view on the LIW website: www.liw.co.uk

REPS National Convention

LIW will once again play host to the REPs National Convention on 25–26 September (Wednesday and Thursday).

The first of the two headlining keynotes will be presented by Dr Ian Campbell MBE, expert on obesity and weight, who will speak on the Wednesday about 'Weight loss - what works, what doesn't and why!' This session will look at understanding



▲ The show floor will come alive with product and programming demonstrations

the multi-faceted problem of obesity, encouraging self-management and long-term behaviour change, and the use of internet and mobile tools to support an individual's weight loss efforts.

On Thursday, Keith Smith, master trainer at Life Fitness, will present on the topic: 'The biggest market for the fitness industry in the next 20 years – the independent older adult'. Smith will provide an understanding of who this client group is, the benefits of working with them, and why it's important for the fitness industry to embrace these individuals. He will also investigate some of the key physiological changes that happen with age, and some of the many factors to consider when planning and delivering a session to this market.

Additional programme highlights include a choice of 30 practical and informative workshops, with topics including GP referral, posture and movement correction, nutrition advice, strongman training, new equipment and social media marketing.

Power Hour

LIW 2013 will challenge fitness professionals to compete with one another across the three days with the launch of a new feature: Power Hour.

Power Hour will rank LIW attendees against one another in unique challenges taking place across the show's buzzing Health & Fitness section. The challenges have been designed by some of the leading fitness suppliers in Europe, with performance data measured by Power Hour partner MYZONE.

Exhibitors taking part include Matrix, Escape Fitness, Physical Company, Queenax and Precor. Each company has designed special 15-minute group exercise challenges which visitors can sign up for in advance of the event. All challenges will take place within the Power Hour of 2.00pm–3.00pm each day. The MYZONE heart rate monitoring system will provide live

feedback on training intensity, calories and MYZONE Effort Points (MEPs), with a leader board highlighting the winner at the end of every day – and ultimately an overall winner, who will be crowned Power Hour champion.

"This challenge has been designed to take advantage of the fantastic array of fitness equipment on show at LIW," says event director James Samuel. "Visitors to LIW have always been encouraged to discover the equipment by actually having a go, and this Power Hour challenge is a natural progression from that. We're delighted with the response we've had from the exhibitors taking part and expect a really competitive atmosphere during the challenges."

The winners will be announced via social media at the end of Thursday 26 September, using #LIWPowerHour. Participants can sign up for Power Hour in advance of the event by visiting www.liw.co.uk/powerhour

LIW Live

LIW Live enjoyed a hugely successful launch at the 2012 event, featuring interviews with sporting superstars including Olympians Greg Searle, Gail Emms, Beth Tweddle and Kate Dennison, celebrities from TV's *The Biggest Loser* and *The Apprentice*, and household name Frank Bruno.

LIW Live returns this year with another fantastic line-up, including interactive demonstrations and interviews. Confirmed for the stage this year is Wasps and England rugby star James Haskell, who will be promoting his Bodyfire and Angry Squirrel brands. Andre Agassi will also appear, and will be available to answer questions on the BLT by Agassi and Reyes equipment range, which is new to the UK and set to be exhibited on stand H575.

Many other presenters are top secret at the time of going to print, but the entire programme will be made available on the LIW website. ●



▲ Fitness professionals will be able to try out the latest product innovations

LES MILLS

THE HOTTEST TICKET @ LIW 2013

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@ BOOTH
H365



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- LES MILLS SMARTBAR®
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- THE RISE OF THE MICROGYM
- GET FIT TOGETHER – LES MILLS GLOBAL RESEARCH
- NEW GROUP X FOR PROFIT
- CREATING THE WORLD'S BEST STUDIO DESIGN

LIW LIVE STAGE:

- TUES 24TH @ 12:00 – 12:15, WED 25TH @ 12:00 – 12:15, THURS 26TH @ 10:45 – 11:00. "LES MILLS SMASH UP" EXPERIENCE THE LATEST FITNESS INNOVATIONS FROM THE UK TRAINER TEAM

SPECIALISED EXERCISE ARENA:

- TUES 24TH @ 14:00 – 14:30, WED 25TH @ 13:15 – 13:45. "GET YOUR CLUB GRIT FIT" DISCOVER HOW LES MILLS GRIT CAN TRANSFORM YOUR CLUBS BOTTOM LINE (AND YOUR CLIENTS WAIST LINES)

LIW KEYNOTE THEATRE:

- WED 25TH @ 13:30 – 14:15 SPEAKER JUST CONFIRMED: BRYCE HASTINGS, RESEARCH AND OPERATIONS, LES MILLS INTERNATIONAL. "FROM ZERO TO HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING – THE GROUP FIT SOLUTION"



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THE CYBEX EFFECT

With a firm presence in both corporate and education markets, plus new product launches and fitness deals on the horizon, Cybex is enjoying a busy 2013



The Gym Hounslow: An install of 50 CV pieces



The Hounslow club has 24/7 access

“**F**or many years, we’ve worked hard to establish our position in the fitness industry – we’re not just simply a supplier of gym equipment but a company that delivers premium quality products, advising and supporting our clients throughout the decision process

and beyond,” commented Rob Thurston, Cybex UK’s commercial director.

“Our longstanding relationships with existing clients and the introduction of new key sites are proof of this and 2013 has already been a real turning point for us; we’ve extended our sales and operations teams, opened a new

showcase site in Sole Fitness and secured contracts with two well-known gym chains.” Cybex also retains a prime position within the education sector following two large scale installations at UK universities at the start of the year.

We look at four of Cybex’s new installs so far in 2013...

CASE STUDY: THE GYM GROUP

In July, Cybex installed over 50 pieces of cardio equipment at the Gym Hounslow, one of the 38 sites that make up the popular Gym Group chain.

The Hounslow facility, which opened in 2008, was the first ever Gym Group site and the new install was an extension to the existing relationship with the Gym Hounslow and Cybex, who installed both cardio and strength training equipment when it first opened over five years ago. The new equipment was from Cybex’s 625 commercial series and included treadmills, upright and recumbent bikes and both lower body and total body Arc Trainers.

The decision to continue with Cybex was based on a number of factors, as Gym Group CEO John Treharne confirmed: “The Hounslow gym opened in 2008 and is one of the busiest in the network. With 24/7 access, our equipment needs to be durable and able to withstand high usage levels – CYBEX originally installed at the facility and after five years of constant use we know the equipment meets our needs.

“For over half of our members, we are the first gym they have joined and so it’s essential that the equipment we use is accessible to all our users irrespective of ability and experience. We have always been happy with the kit originally provided by CYBEX and we were happy to maintain our relationship and upgrade the equipment as part of this latest install.”

CASE STUDY: SNAP FITNESS

Already with a well-established partnership with international gym franchise Snap Fitness, Cybex installed equipment at the chain’s third UK site in Market Harborough this summer.

As the newest addition to the network of almost 1400 fitness clubs worldwide, Snap Fitness Market Harborough introduces the concept of 24/7 gym access to the area for the first time, providing members with maximum flexibility to train at their own convenience and at an affordable price.

“Cybex came recommended to us following installs at sites in the US; that said we still underwent a competitive tender process

to find the best supplier for our gym and Cybex came out on top,” confirmed Ash Pattani, Snap Fitness owner.

“It wasn’t just the equipment we loved; it was the expert advice and training Cybex offered for the site launch.”



Snap Fitness Market Harborough introduced a 24/7 gym concept



The University of Dublin underwent a major Cybex refurbishment earlier this year, doubling the size of its gym

CASE STUDY: EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

With a client list that includes the Universities of Birmingham, Bristol and Nottingham, Cybex equipment is a popular choice for the UK's top sports institutions. The University of Liverpool's 7000 member gym became the latest addition when it re-opened in January 2013, following extensive site renovations.

The gym, which is used by University students, staff and alumni as well as members of the public, boasts over 100 new pieces of equipment from Cybex, who have created an advanced strength training area within the gym floor.

Lower body and total body Arc Trainers plus treadmills from Cybex's premium 770 cardio series were also installed, featuring a range of Personalised Entertainment Monitors with iPod® connectivity.

University of Liverpool's Sport & Fitness Centre wasn't the only facility this year with a Cybex refurbishment;

the University College Dublin (UCD) also underwent site extensions, resulting in a gym more than double the previous size.

"The range of equipment offered by Cybex has ensured that we can cater to the needs of all users, regardless of their ability, level of fitness or training needs," said Hughie McGearty, UCD Sport and Fitness Centre manager.

"Not only is Cybex's equipment of a very high quality, its support, advice and service to customers is excellent; it is because of this combination that we chose Cybex, who have faultlessly delivered where competing suppliers couldn't."

Home to over 2500 members from the student population and local community as well as athletes and sports students, UCD Sport & Fitness Centre is also used by professional rugby union side Leinster and was also used by Heineken Cup winner Toulon in the build-up to the tournament's final in May 2013.



Looking to the future

Building on the success of the year to date, Cybex has already extended its partnership with the UK's leading provider of employee wellbeing services Nuffield Health with installs at Waitrose. Rob Thurston says Cybex is looking at a busy end to 2013: "With our corporate market presence firmly established, product launches on the horizon and extensive agreements with new facilities in the pipeline, we're in a fantastic position as we head into the second half of the year.

"Client feedback is the best indicator of our premium products and customer service and, backed by the international brand, Cybex UK continues to reaffirm its position as one of the industry's leading equipment manufacturers."

EXHIBITOR NEWS

THE LATEST NEWS FROM EXHIBITORS AT LIW 2013

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Why waste money on costly monthly licences for 'club management software' when MVS+ gives all the info you really need on a single screen, free of charge? Designed in consultation with gym owners, MVS+ requires no data entry and shows you each member's attendance frequency as they enter your club + the number/type of new members month-on-month and your total split of membership types. See also the innovative ShapeWatchers programme, aimed at lapsed gym members – a simple step-by-step exercise programme which rebuilds the exercise habit, with the aim of attracting people back to the gym.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

BADMINTON ENGLAND

Tel: +44 (0)1908 268466

www.badmintonengland.co.uk/playbadminton

BADMINTON England's innovative new PlayBadminton framework can net leisure operators up to £130k extra revenue pa. With full NGB support, your facility can access new membership leads, increased footfall, capital grants investment, higher badminton court utilisation and exciting new products + much more. To get strong returns from the casual badminton market of over 1.9 million people, visit BADMINTON England at Stand H385.

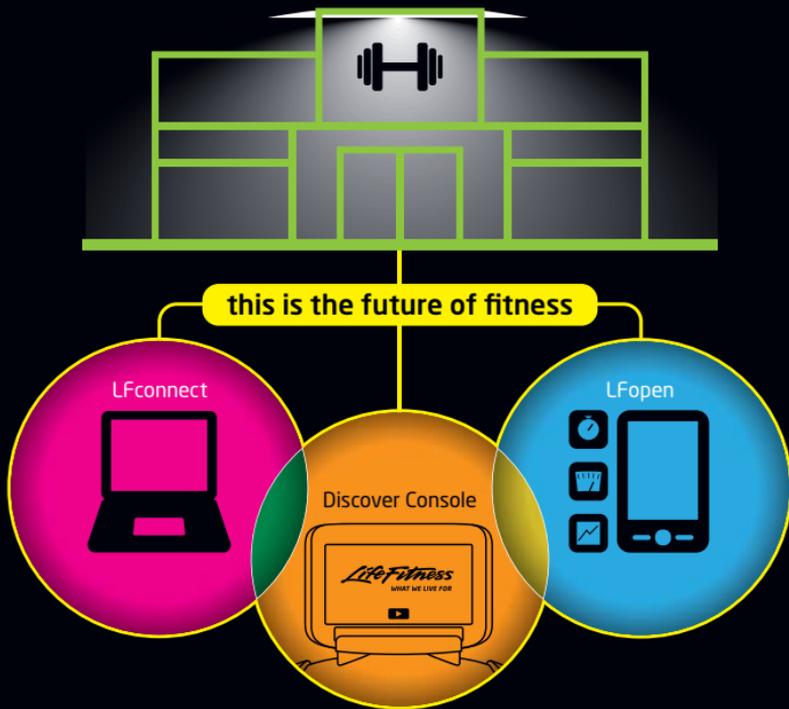
SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS ▶

To find out more about badminton, visit stand H385



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Code of Practice



The ukactive Code of Practice is a mark of quality that reflects a site's commitment to high standards of health and safety, staff training and customer care.

The Code of Practice assures:

- » Confidence in your facility
- » Alignment to the Corporate Manslaughter Act
- » Raised standards

By the end of the process every site will be up to date legally and professionally, safe in the knowledge that the needs of both staff and customers have been effectively evaluated.

For more information about the ukactive Code of Practice, contact us on cop@ukactive.org.uk



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More often



The Body Plus range includes 18 meal choices

BODY FIRE LIMITED

Tel: +44 (0)1344 860861

www.thegodscollection.com

James Haskell (London Wasps/England Rugby) is delighted to introduce his Functional Food Supplement Range – The Gods Collection. The collection, designed by an athlete for athletes, comprises the all pure, Informed Sport certified, accolade-winning Pre-Trainer Hades; the new female version of it, called Hella; Tagaloo, which is a new Organic Virgin Coconut Oil; and Virtus, a new Super Food containing 61 different multi-vitamins and minerals. All the Gods Collection products have been formulated and manufactured to the highest GMP standards and where applicable are Informed Sports certified. Also on the stand you will find Angry Squirrel Coffee and Functional Fitness Training Available for the wholesale market. The range is available either loose or in self-merchandising display units designed to maximise sales and product awareness. All the products are supported by national advertising campaigns in the trade press.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

BODY PLUS NUTRITION

Tel: +44 (0)844 332 1239

www.bodyplustr nutrition.com

Body Plus Nutrition provide delicious, chef prepared convenience meals nutritionally tailored for gym and health club members. Using natural ingredients the different ranges are designed to support muscle gain, weight maintenance and weight loss diets with vegetarian options. There are 18 meal choices rotated for variety. Working on a profit share model there is no capital risk or outlay for venues; all delivery and stock control is handled with branded fridges provided. We add a valuable 'on the go' food service to clubs who have no food facilities in place as well as providing an 'on the go' service in venues with café/restaurant facilities available – perfect for time constrained members. Products significantly boost club profits with members now being able to purchase convenient fresh food products in house rather than at high street outlets or supermarkets. From small operators to exclusive health clubs products always generate excellent sales.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

PAVIGYM SOLUTIONS.

PAVIGYM™, the premium flooring manufacturer invites you to join us in celebration of our 50th Anniversary during this year's LIW event in Birmingham at Booth H310 & H410 and also during presentations at the PAVIGYM™ sponsored Functional Training area.

PAVIGYM™ products, solutions and new concepts provide key elements to fitness facilities with style, design and function which deliver the best member experience possible while optimizing the space.



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**BOOTH
H310 & H410**

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www.pavigym.com
www.functionalzone.com



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Tel: +44 (0)161 330 6531
 Web: www.brother.co.uk

Brother is a leading global provider of technology solutions – including design, manufacturer and distribution of printers, multifunction and mobile printers, labellers and fax machines. We develop solutions that increase efficiency, save time and achieve best value, now and in the future. Brother continues to demonstrate its investment commitment of product innovation by launching our ultra high speed workgroup printing. With ground-breaking print speeds up to 100 pages per minute, the award-winning HL-S7000DN mono printer is ideal for fast-paced environments. Another efficiency-driving solution is our print management software (bguard) where true transparency and control can reduce costs. Our range of lightweight, mobile and portable devices helps support working on the move from printing to document scanning, enabling print and archiving documents in the Cloud. Plus our web and video conferencing software (OmniJoin) allows businesses to share and collaborate documents and hold secure, reliable, boardroom quality meetings from PCs or laptops. We are extremely proud of our longstanding reputation for environmental and ethical excellence, having been awarded The Queen's for Enterprise: Sustainable Development. Brother was singled out for our ongoing commitment to more responsible and sustainable business practices, our commitment to waste management and energy conservation.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

CAP2 SOLUTIONS

Tel: +44 (0)7854 117 217
 Web: www.cap2.co.uk

CoursePro was designed initially for swimming lesson management, enabling fast and accurate poolside administration using an iPod, up to date reporting and parental interaction via HomePortal. The software, which can be used with any course-based criteria, has been endorsed by the governing body for swimming in England. It takes advantage of the latest technology using iPod and internet technology, to bring teaching into the 21st century, removing paperwork processes for swimming teachers and coaches.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

CLUBWISE

Tel: +44 (0)1844 348300
 Web: www.clubwise.com

Find the ClubWise stand in Hall 4, Stand L250 to discover how ClubWise's fully integrated club management software, direct debit collection and unique marketing can reduce your administration, improve your efficiency and increase membership sales! Not only that, but LiWV will host the launch of the brand new and exciting ClubWise mobile apps. The apps are designed for the people that power the clubs, and will positively transform the way fitness clubs sell to, retain and monitor their members using the latest technology. Meeting and greeting will be our friend and mascot, Steve. ClubWise provides Steve's gym with the tool kit for an extraordinary member journey from the start, and Steve is so delighted he wants to tell you all about it! We also have some exclusive promotions available for LiWV attendees, head over to find out more! We look forward to seeing you!

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

CODELOCKS LTD

Tel: +44 (0) 1635 239645
 Web: www.codelocks.co.uk

KitLock unveils its most versatile and functional keyless locker lock at LiWV Do you spend far too much time managing the locker keys at your gym, leisure centre or spa? Looking for a more convenient alternative? Then visit stand number L266 and discover our KitLock range of keyless locker locks. Fitted in place of standard cam locks, clients can simply enter a four-digit code on the keypad, lock and go; free to enjoy their fitness session without having to carry a key or use coins or tokens. At this year's show we are showcasing our most versatile and functional lock yet – the KitLock 1500. This sleek-looking lock can be fitted in any orientation due to its patented keypad design. It boasts a 'real time' clock that can be programmed to automatically open after a set period of time. We look forward to seeing you at the show.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

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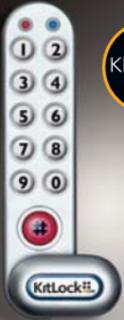
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Quick, tough and cost effective.



KL1500
electronic

COMING SOON FOR 2013

VERSATILE

KL1500 is the latest addition to the KitLock range, combining all the features of the KL1000 and KL1200 plus a lot more! 'Real Time' clock, multiple user codes, program two codes to open lock, fit in any orientation.

Full details on this new lock at www.kitlock.com



LEISURE
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Stand L266

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LIW2013 - STAND H420

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The BILT range was designed in partnership with tennis star Andre Agassi

CONCEPT FITNESS INTERNATIONAL

Tel: 0845 363 9969

www.conceptfitnessinternational.com

Stand H575 is a must visit this year. As well as showcasing its TKO brand of quality strength and fitness equipment, Concept Fitness International is also launching the most revolutionary line of athletic training equipment to enter the UK market in 40 years – BILT by Agassi & Reyes. Exclusively distributed by Concept Fitness International throughout the UK, Ireland and the Middle East, BILT by Agassi & Reyes consists of 12 machines, which are all modelled on the exact equipment Andre Agassi – eight-time tennis Grand Slam title holder – used to train during his championship tennis career. Featuring the award winning COD Machine, BILT by Agassi & Reyes machines are precision engineered for high-intensity muscle isolation to help users safely and effectively reach any sports-training goal. Designed by Reyes – who currently trains some of the world's top Tennis, Basketball and NFL athletes on the equipment – they are built for productivity: high intensity muscle isolation to safely build strength without injury. Andre will be appearing on Stand H575 on Thursday 26 September and will be taking to the LIW Live Stage to share the BILT by Agassi & Reyes story and the reasons why his equipment is such a big hit.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

CREATIVE FITNESS MARKETING

Tel: +44 (0)115 777 3333

www.creativefitness.net

Do you want an extra 200 to 700 members for free? Memberdrive implements and executes a full-scale marketing campaign for you, where each and every marketing method works together to drive the de-conditioned and hard-to-reach people to your health club. In just four to six weeks, we conduct an explosive membership sales drive incorporating over 30 different marketing media driven by direct mail, centralised telemarketing, on-site sales consultants, corporate and business outreach, online initiatives and innovative guerrilla marketing techniques, all designed to enrol 200 to 700 new members into your health club. We bear all the financial risk, front all the capital required and provide the sales staff and marketing material. We work on a commission only basis, sharing profits only on the long-term memberships that we have generated for you to provide a completely risk free and truly win-win scenario.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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See us on stand **P415** at **LIW 2013**

24-26 Sept 2013 · NEC Birmingham UK

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www.xnleisure.com



Cybex's wide range of equipment includes the Arc Trainer

CYBEX INTERNATIONAL UK

Tel: +44 (0) 845 606 0228

www.cybexintl.com

Cybex is a leading manufacturer of premium fitness equipment, designed to improve physical wellbeing, function and performance. Alongside its full range of cardiovascular equipment which includes the innovative Arc Trainer, Cybex produces the industry's largest selection of strength training equipment with over 150 unique pieces. Launching at this year's Leisure Industry Week is the 790T treadmill, with enhanced speed levels programmed to reach 15.6 miles per hour (25kph) and a maximum incline reaching 20 per cent. Also new to the UK market and making its debut at LIV is the Big Iron glute ham/reverse hyper-extension bench, part of Cybex's popular Big Iron range of racks and benches. Full body workouts will be taking place throughout each day, ran by Cybex Master Trainers and incorporating both strength and cardio equipment. Selectorised strength equipment will also be on the stand alongside cardio pieces from the 625 and 770 series', showcasing Cybex's most advanced entertainment console the E3 View.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

DALESAUNA LTD

Tel: 01423 798630

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

This year we have seen a real explosion of interest from local authorities and trusts, and have completed several large scale spa developments at Westminster Lodge (St Albans District Council), Ramsgate Leisure Centre in conjunction with Alliance Leisure, and Wimbledon LC (for GLL). It seems that there is a real desire now from these operators to provide very high end spa facilities, certainly in keeping with anything the private sector has to offer. Wellness as opposed to fitness has become a big issue, and what better way to combat one of the UK's biggest medical issues, stress, than to relax in a spa. The private sector has slowed down recently, with refurbishment of existing facilities being the major spend as opposed to new build. Through our service department, we can offer very prompt call out for service and repair on most manufacturers products at very competitive prices.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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Stand H575



LEISURE
INDUSTRY
WEEK

24 -26 September 2013
NEC Birmingham UK

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www.xcube.co.uk

Introducing the XCUBE The bespoke functional training station designed to facilitate highly innovative group, individual, PT, performance, sports specific, and general training programmes. XCUBE provides a workout space that enables mixed abilities to train side by side in a safe, fun, and effective training environment. Offering exceptional value for money and return on investment, the bespoke service enables health club operators to benefit from the latest training methods and create a competitive point of difference. The Gym landscape is changing. XCUBE. Anyspace. Anywhere.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

ESCAPE FITNESS

Tel: +44 (0)1733 313535

www.escapefitness.com

Fun experiences make life good, so why should the gym experience not be fun? Sure your members want results, but what if they could achieve these in a fun environment, one designed to create a playful, vibrant and positive experience? Fun is a key reason they return, no member fails to renew because they're having too much fun. You want more people, more often in your facility. The more a member returns the more they'll renew and refer. You build this mindset through giving them what they want – by making their experience fun and engaging, making them smile and feel good. Don't make them workout, let them have fun and play. Now is the time to create the positive experiences that give your members results and drive up retention and referrals. It's time to have fun and play. See how at stand H405.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Escape Fitness will exhibit its range of kit on stand H405

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GANTNER is the leading manufacturer of SMART card system solutions. All GANTNER products are specially designed for the requirements of the global leisure industry. The offered system solutions include access control, electronic wardrobe locking systems and cashless payment applications. GANTNER has proven to be amongst the most reliable on the market. High quality, great design, flexibility and short payback times are GANTNER's strengths. GANTNER hardware and 3rd party club management software create a fully integrated system solution which is extremely convenient and secure. Visit our stand at LIW where you will also find our local partner Craftsman Lockers.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

GLADSTONE HEALTH & LEISURE

Tel: +44 (0)1491 201010
www.gladstonemrm.com

Gladstone Health & Leisure offers a single, integrated solution to manage sales and marketing, membership management, bookings and resources, payments and finance, communications, point of sale, access control and security, and management information and reports; all in one place. Exhibiting on stand L110 at this year's LIW, Gladstone will be launching two new products for the leisure industry. eyeQ's makes it easy for facilities to pivot, slice, dice, filter and present data in a number of ways, including tables and charts. The intuitive tool works hand in hand with Gladstone's other products – Business Process Manager and Communicate – allowing operators to schedule in and automate reports and analysis, as well as communications to members. Communicate unlocks the goldmine of information held by Gladstone's Plus2 membership management software, helping operators interact with their members, and measure the effectiveness of those communications on turnover and their impact upon brand perception.

SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES



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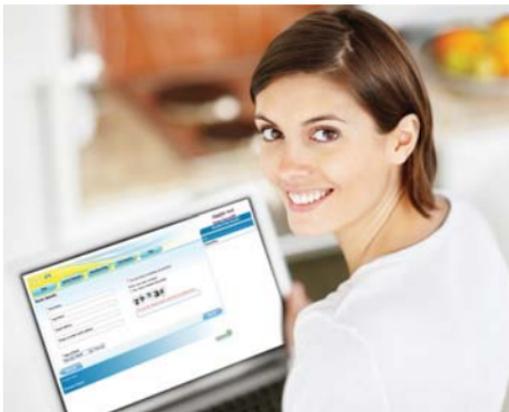
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Gladstone will be launching two new products at LIW

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Total Gym's incline body weight trainer was created in 1974 and has gone on to sell to well over five million customers around the globe. In 2007 the commercial Total Gym was designed along with the GRAVITY Training System. GRAVITY UK is the exclusive distributor of Total Gym equipment and the GRAVITY Training System, for information on how to supercharge your business with incline body weight training on world class equipment supported with education and programming then make your way to our stand. The GRAVITY Training System will make a direct impact on your bottom line; we have proven systems that will show a healthy return on your investment within eight months with member feedback that is unparalleled. To see GRAVITY Training for yourself and to understand how it can work for your business, make your way to stand H420.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



The exclusive distributor of Total Gym equipment

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www.lifefitness.co.uk

Achieving strength on the field means building strength off it. Hammer Strength is committed to offering equipment for hardworking athletes to out-train the competition. Innovation, durability and quality create the foundation from which our brand was born. Iso-lateral technology found in our Plate-Loaded, Ground Base and MTS equipment replicates sports action three ways: the body's natural movements, the converging and diverging motions provide extra challenge, and the independent arms allow athletes to move both limbs at the same time, independently, alternately or with different weights for each. The strongest, heavyweight racks around, HD Elite is built from the ground up with one goal in mind – to unleash potential. Only Hammer Strength fortifies your training with Anvil Bracing bolting configurations, Spider Gusset jointing and HammerLock laser-cut technology. HD Elite Racks are custom-built with the exact options you need to put your teams to the test.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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Take an iconic industry product that has been a mainstay in facilities for decades and give it the intuitive and entertainment packed display that StarTrac has become famous for and you have the StarTrac StairMill™, a new player in a category that's been a facility favorite for many years.

Spinner® Blade ION

Spinnering® is once again on the cutting edge of technology and comprehensive education with the launch of the **Spinner® Blade ION**, manufactured by StarTrac. Accurate strain-gauge power meter technology backed by the **Spinpower™** program.

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The BoxMaster® is a new form of boxing style conditioning that will wow your clients. With the ability to cater to all types of members, the BoxMaster will excite and encourage greater participation in boxing style fitness training.

Visit StarTrac at **LIW, Hall 4, Stand #H530** to meet the new members of the family.
For more information contact StarTrac at **+44 (0)1494 688260** or **uksales@startrac.com**.

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APPY DAYS



The app can help increase brand reach by enabling more sharing on social media

The launch of Gladstone's iPhone app at NCCLeisure in Nottingham has been greatly received by members who can now easily manage their own class bookings

Embadding new technology to increase the level of customer service is a priority for us. The iPhone is one of the most popular mobile interfaces, so we were driven to be the first to market with Gladstone's iPhone app.

We launched the app at our nine leisure centres in May, allowing our subscription based members, who have access to all nine sites, to book fitness classes and the gym and health suite via their iPhones and iPods.

It was promoted as part of a wider customer service improvement campaign across our website, via social media on the leisure centre specific pages, as well as mynottingham and Nottingham Sport Facebook and Twitter pages, and internally within the leisure centres. We encouraged members to

"USING THE APP I MANAGED TO BEAT THE RUSH TO GET INTO FRIDAY NIGHT ZUMBA!"

download the app by offering members using it to book activities from May to July the chance to win an iPad Mini.

Just a few weeks after the launch 75 people had downloaded the app, which is branded as NCCLeisure in the App Store, and we expect the competition to help this to increase massively by the end of July.

Increasing customer service

Our staff are really happy that they can offer this useful tool to customers and it's certainly saving the time as more customers are self serving for their activity needs. We expect this customer

channel shift to increase as time goes on as the customers love it too! Feedback includes: "Love this app, so quick to book a class"; "Using the app I managed to beat the rush to get into Friday night Zumba!"; "Love it, love it, love it! I can book and plan my favourite classes".

We've been a Gladstone customer for nine years and it's definitely one of the most successful software launches from Gladstone that we've been involved with. It will help grow our brand reach and I've no doubt fitness class bookings will receive a social boost as members post their activity on their wall and friends that see it want to join them or are inspired to get active themselves, creating more secondary spend too!

"LOVE IT, LOVE IT, LOVE IT! I CAN BOOK AND PLAN TO GO MY FAVOURITE CLASSES"

Alexander Lucas, Sport, Culture and Parks, Nottingham City Council

HIPPO LEISURE

Tel: +44 (0)1752 771740
www.hippoleisure.com

Hippo will exhibit their bright and vibrant Live Interactive Play Platform. Features include an interactive mast with a large tipping bucket and splash board, interactive play panels, water cascades and a fun multi-slide. Visit Hippo on stand P620 for unique tips on increasing revenue through play, and discuss the most appropriate options for your pool shape, size and budget. Also collect your free Hippo goodie bag, including a USB stick featuring our latest electronic brochure.

SECTION: POOL & SPA

HORNE ENGINEERING LTD

Tel: +44 (0)1505 336287
www.horne.co.uk

Follow the Innovation Trail to stand L221 to be inspired and impressed by the striking design and superior functionality of the new Dušo shower column from Horne Engineering Ltd. It's specifically designed for group shower installations in community leisure and team sport facilities, including poolside and outdoor environments. A selection of colour options offer visual impact or practical indicators. The Dušo also excels in its performance, durability and ease of maintenance. More than 90 years ago Horne invented the thermostatic mixing valve, thus the Horne group shower package is the optimal combination of group thermostatic mixer with the dashing Dušo.

SECTION: POOL & SPA



Horne's Dušo column suits group shower installations

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JC LEISURE SOLUTIONS LLP

Tel: +44 (0)1376 513246

www.jcleasuresolutions.com

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SECTION: POOL & SPA

JORDAN FITNESS

Tel: +44 (0)1553 763285

www.jordanfitness.co.uk

Jordan Fitness is a market leader in the design, manufacture and supply of premium grade, functional fitness equipment, and the preferred supplier to a wide range of fitness facilities for 25 years. Our products are the result of innovative product development, market research and rigorous testing. Competitively priced, we are also exclusive distributors for top brands, including Lifeline USA, Alpha Strong, SAQ and Loumet. We also provide comprehensive training and proudly offer the largest portfolio of REPs endorsed CPD courses in Europe. Combining our high-quality equipment and industry-leading education, our Results Based Training (RBT) programme has been developed to help anyone wishing to

implement a functional training area into their facility. Using the RBT system, our expert team can guide you through the three key stages (Enhance, Evaluate and Engage) to ensure that you have the equipment, knowledge and support to get the results you want. Visit us on Stand H475 in Hall 4 where we will showcase and demonstrate our newest functional fitness products. We also have appearances from pro-boxer Jordan Gill and rugby legends Jason Robinson OBE and James Haskell.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



Results Driven System – enhance, evaluate and engage



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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www.lesmills.com

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

LIFE FITNESS UK LTD

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: POOL & SPA

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www.matrixfitness.com

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS



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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: PLAY & ATTRACTIONS



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www.pavigy.com

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: LEISURE FACILITIES

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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www.fitness-mad.com

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

PRECOR

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www.precor.com

Precor has chosen LIW for the UK launch of Preva® Tokens, a new feature to Preva, the industry's first open platform networked fitness solution, which has seen over 25 million workouts logged worldwide since 2010. Preva Tokens are RFID enabled key fobs that allow exercisers to simply swipe or tap the equipment to automatically sign in to their Preva Account on any networked P80 console, giving access to their favourite workouts, fitness goals, progress milestones and rewards, before they've even had time to set down their water bottle. The Preva portfolio includes Preva Business Suite (PBS), which enables operators to monitor and manage use of equipment, and Preva Net for internet content and entertainment, delivered in a format specifically designed for the in-motion exerciser. Preva is automatically updated over the internet, eliminating the need for upgrading or troubleshooting by the facility.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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www.aquaticregister.org

RAPs has been created to enhance professionalism in the aquatic industry. This new aquatic register has been developed in partnership with the major aquatic organisations: ASA, RLSS and STA. For the first time, a Single Qualification Framework has been produced in this industry. Join RAPs in the Keynote Theatre on 26th September, 11:30 – 12:15. This is your chance to find out more about this new aquatic register and the benefits it can bring to your organisation. The RAPs team will be on hand to address your key questions and queries. Visit RAPs at P416

www.aquaticregister.org

SECTION: POOL & SPA

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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James Haskell of London Wasps and England Rugby, is working with Leisure Industry Week to promote power sports, nutrition, supplements and functional fitness training at the show.

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- ▶ be unveiling its new Swim Star Schools programme, and will announce the details of the latest local authority to sign up to become a STA Swim Academy. Visit Stand No P120.

SECTION: POOL & SPA

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

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www.thehealthcounter.com chooses LIW to launch its innovative Virtual Pharmacy, the ultimate in 'shopping on the go'. Ideal for fitness clubs, leisure centres, gyms and spas, Virtual Pharmacy from The Healthcounter offers 'shelves' of carefully selected products for sale to members and visitor alike, without taking up floor space! It simply attaches to a wall, or free stands in reception, and customers can scan, click and buy – their shopping is then delivered to their door, no need to lug around heavy boxes or bags (even if it is good for toning biceps and bingo wings!). The Healthcounter's Fitness Ambassador, James Haskell, explains: "Virtual Pharmacy is a great idea – when you're rushing from work to the gym to pack in some training it's hard to make time to shop. This is the perfect solution for stocking up on fitness essentials, including my own Hades range."

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Tel: +44 (0)1323 440760
www.topline.uk.net

Topline Electronics Limited, the UK's largest manufacturer of swimming pool chemical control systems, is to be exhibiting on stand P310 at LIW, this year with a greater emphasis on our Aachen Wellness brand of sauna and steam rooms for health and fitness clubs, leisure centres and high-end domestic installations. Aachen Wellness is the UK's fastest growing brand of saunas and steam rooms, designed and manufactured in Lancashire, offering a bespoke quality product to the health and wellness facility market. Topline will also be exhibiting the TEC range of energy conservation products and integrated systems for pools and spas.

SECTION: POOL & SPA

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ukactive is the not-for-profit body which provides services and facilitates partnerships for a broad range of organisations, all of which support the vision of more people, more active, more often. We are committed to facilitating partnerships, improving product and service standards, sharing insights and education and raising consumer awareness of the benefits of an active lifestyle. For more information on the benefits of joining ukactive, come and find us on stand H355.

SECTION: HEALTH & FITNESS

WATTBIKE

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Wattbike, the indoor bike of choice for the health and fitness industry, launches enhanced wireless connectivity and new testing features at Leisure Industry Week 2013. Operators can now wirelessly connect Wattbikes together to capture and display indoor cycling class performance metrics including power, heart rate and cadence on a large display screen. The Wattbike's new test features give Personal Trainers the ability to perform a range of scientifically accurate fitness assessments and receive instant analysis to provide clients with invaluable feedback. Wattbike, endorsed and used by British Cycling, will be showcasing both features on stand H480.

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Fitness4Less Newport

PREMIUM

LivingWell Newport
Spa Natural Fitness Cardiff

WEST MIDLANDS**BUDGET**

Fit4Less Redditch
Fitness4Less Birmingham

MID-MARKET

Everyone Active, Malmesbury Splash
Haden Hill Leisure Centre
Perdiswell Leisure Centre - Harpers Fitness
Ryland Centre
Smeethwick Swimming Centre
Tipton Sports Academy
Wednesbury Leisure Centre

PREMIUM

Chesford Grange QHotels
Spa Natural Fitness Brandon Hall
Spa Natural Fitness Shawbury
St. George's Park Health Club

EAST MIDLANDS**BUDGET**

Fitness4Less Northampton

MID-MARKET

energy Fitness For Women Arnold
energy Fitness For Women Long Eaton
Everyone Active Dventry Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Enderby Leisure & Golf Centre
Everyone Active Hinckley Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Lamas Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Waterfield Leisure Centre
Everyone Active West Lindsey Leisure Centre

PREMIUM

Forest Pines QHotels
LivingWell East Midlands Airport

MEMBERS' CHOICE**HEALTH CLUB AWARDS 2013**

healthclubawards.co.uk

OFFICIAL SHORTLIST**BEST BUDGET CHAIN (5+ clubs)**

Fit4Less
Fitness4Less
Xercise4Less

BEST SMALL CHAIN (3-9 clubs)

Aquatera
One Leisure
Sandwell Leisure Trust
Xercise4Less
YMCA London South West

BEST MEDIUM CHAIN (10-30 clubs)

BPL Group
Fit4Less
Fitness4Less
QHotels
Spa Natural

BEST LARGE CHAIN (30+ clubs)

energy Fitness Clubs
energy Fitness For Women
Everyone Active
LivingWell

GRAND PRIX CATEGORIES

Best Budget Club in the UK
Best Mid Market Club in the UK
Best Premium Club in the UK

Regional and national winners will be announced on Tuesday 24th September at the 3rd annual Health Club Awards Ceremony.

The awards will be held at the National Motorcycle Museum, Birmingham on the first night of Leisure Industry week.

TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS FOR THIS PRESTIGIOUS EVENT GO TO

www.healthclubawards.co.uk/table-booking

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
health club
management

LivingWell Leicester

LivingWell Northampton
Nuffield Health Nottingham
The Nottingham Belfry QHotels

EAST OF ENGLAND**MID-MARKET**

energy Fitness Leighton Buzzard
Everybody Health & Fitness
Everyone Active Cambourne Fitness and Sports Centre
Everyone Active Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Stradbroke Swim & Fitness Centre
One Leisure Huntingdon
One Leisure Ramsey
One Leisure Sawby
One Leisure St Neots
One Leisure St Neots

PREMIUM

LivingWell Cambridge

SOUTH WEST**BUDGET**

Fitness4Less Bristol

MID-MARKET

Everyone Active Blandford Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Hanbury Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Kingsdown Sport Centre
Keynham Leisure Centre - Aquatera

SOUTHERN**BUDGET**

Fitness4Less Cheltenham
Fitness4Less Chesham

MID-MARKET

energy Fitness Andover
energy Fitness For Women Bicester
energy Fitness Liscombe Park
Everyone Active Stratford Park Leisure Centre

PREMIUM

LivingWell Bracknell
LivingWell Milton Keynes
LivingWell Reading
LivingWell Swindon
Nirvana Wellness Suite
Pulse 8
The Cheltenham Chase QHotels

LONDON**BUDGET**

Fit4Less Caspian Wharf
Fit4Less Kilburn
Fitness4Less Cambridge Heath
Fitness4Less Southwark

MID-MARKET

Archway Leisure Centre - Aquatera
energy Fitness For Women North Finchley
energy Fitness Forest Hill
energy Fitness Northway Park
Highbury Pool & Fitness Centre - Aquatera
The Armoury Jubilee Trust Hampstead
Westminster Gym Jubilee Trust
Wildesden Sports Centre - Harpers Fitness
YMCA Club Great Russell Street
YMCA Club Wimbledon

PREMIUM

Dolphin Fitness Club
LivingWell London Docklands
LivingWell London Metropole
LivingWell London Wembley

SOUTH EAST - Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex**BUDGET**

Everyone Active Eversley Leisure Centre
Fitness4Less Southend
Fitness4Less Watford

MID-MARKET

energy Fitness For Women St Albans
Everyone Active Basildon Sporting Village
Everyone Active Central Park Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Hartham Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Hornchurch Sport Centre
Everyone Active Waltham Abbey Pool
Everyone Active Watford Leisure Centre - Central
Everyone Active Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre

PREMIUM

LivingWell Stansted
LivingWell Watford

SOUTH EAST - Kent, Surrey, Sussex**BUDGET**

Everyone Active Phoenix Leisure Centre
Fit4Less Canterbury
Fit4Less Maidstone
Fitness4Less Sutton

MID-MARKET

Addlestone Leisure Centre - Achieve Lifestyle
Egham Leisure Centre - Achieve Lifestyle
energy Fitness East Grinstead
Everyone Active Chiam Leisure Centre
Everyone Active David Meir Leisure Centre
Everyone Active Spelthorne Leisure Centre
YMCA Club Hawker Centre
YMCA Club Surbiton

PREMIUM

Ashford International QHotels
LivingWell Arundel
LivingWell Brighton Metropole
LivingWell Dartford
LivingWell Maidstone



Preva helps her reach her goals
and you reach your numbers.



Making it yours...works! Preva® works for exercisers by letting them create their own workouts, set weekly goals, track progress and get steady encouragement. And Preva works for you because engaged exercisers participate fully with your facility.

