

# CLUB INDUSTRY

OCTOBER 2023



**TECHNOLOGY  
AND THE  
FITNESS  
INDUSTRY  
TODAY**



Photo by Getty Images.

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## EDITOR'S LETTER

# KEEPING IT REAL

A friend of mine was lamenting recently that she wasn't keeping up with her workout regimen. She wasn't showing up at the gym and she was ghosting her personal trainer because she felt so guilty. She was failing herself, she was failing him and she was wasting money on her membership. It had all the components of a real meltdown.

Then one day she awoke to a text from her personal trainer. "Been busy lately?" is all he said. She told me she was relieved to hear from him and that she was so pleased he wasn't coming on strong about her absence from the club.

After a bit she explained to him what was going on in her life and while she now feels she gave him too much information, he still responded thoughtfully, essentially leaving the option up to her as to whether she wanted to come back to training with him. Either way, he was fine with her decision.

Happy to report she is going back; that brief conversation with her trainer got her thinking about why she wanted to work with him in the first place and what her original health goals were. She felt heard by him and felt no pressure to go in either direction.

The club industry is going through so many great changes. Facilities and amenities are improving constantly. Competition for the customer means all of the franchise brands need to keep evolving their product and programs.

But in the end, success is going to come down to the human element of these clubs and what they do to feed the human psyche. What is the experience when the client walks through the door? Are they put off by the people at the front desk or are they warmly welcomed? Do they feel scared and inferior when they initiate their workout program because they don't know how to use the equipment and no one is slightly interested in helping them out?

Club professionals need to be psychologists, sometimes therapists or sometimes just a quiet presence next to someone who is trying to either start their health journey or break through to the next level in strength training. Artificial intelligence will never replace that, nor will any other technology. And that's a good thing because humanity is what will motivate that hesitant client to get off their couch or forge ahead to be even better than they thought they could be.

Let's remember that as club facilities get more sophisticated, the human element, that one-to-one client relationship, needs to evolve as well.



Sincerely,

Ruthanne Terrero  
Vice President,  
Content Director

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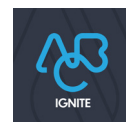
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# ABC IGNITE DATA SHOWS STRONG START FOR CLUBS THIS YEAR

**H**ave you had the feeling that members are joining in increased numbers this year? Well, they have been. We can confirm your suspicion with hard data from the ABC Ignite portfolio. In fact, the number of joins in H1 of 2023 is not only topping last year but is 80% above pandemic levels.

If you're interested in learning about the age and gender breakdown of these new members, you might find it intriguing that women between the ages of 36 and 75 are joining at higher rates than men.

For a comprehensive view of these statistics and more, we invite you to explore our latest

report. Dive into the numbers to stay ahead of industry trends this year.

## **BIO**

*ABC Fitness (ABC) is the market-leading software and services provider for fitness businesses globally. Building upon a legacy of excellence, ABC enables fitness operators of all sizes, anywhere in the world, to transform their vision of fitness into seamless reality. Whether a boutique studio, international franchise, regional club chain, local gym, or personal trainer, ABC provides the industry insights, technology, and innovation to partner for growth long-term.*



Photo by Getty Images.



# Ignite Club Membership Trends for H1: 2020–2023

Discover fitness industry trends and insights from across the ABC Ignite portfolio.

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[ignite.abcfitness.com](https://ignite.abcfitness.com)



# THE 3 FASTEST-GROWING TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

The fitness industry is always evolving. Each year, more gyms and clubs offer the latest fitness technologies in their facilities to stay current with their competitors. Not to mention that the fitness market is one of the best markets to be in to start a business, with annual growth of 3-4%.

With that amount of growth, it is no wonder fitness technologies have been increasing exponentially. Having the latest technology is great. But to stay ahead of the curve, you need to know which technology trends in fitness are experiencing the most extensive growth and have the highest earning potential.

Here are the three fastest-growing trends in the fitness industry:

## 1. Online class reservation

The convenience of online class reservation software is unparalleled, which is why scheduling software is expected to be worth over \$360 million by 2024. It keeps everything simple by allowing members to register online, where instructors and operators can easily track all those who sign up. Also, online class registration does not require any emails or phone calls to complete, freeing up time for staff.

Another key benefit to online class reservations is that it prevents classes from overfilling. No instructor enjoys teaching an over-capacity class, but online registration provides a frictionless process, so your instructors never have to worry. Likewise, members can easily cancel their registration online at any time, making that process as easy as possible for both club owners and members.

## 2. Online training services

When social distancing orders were put in place, 16% of adults said that they watched more fitness videos online. Online coaching and virtual training have emerged as a staple in the fitness industry. Many contemporary clubs utilize mobile apps and integration technology as a liaison between club members and instructors. Countless apps are available that simulate personal trainers through an individual's smartphone, which can help them reach their personal fitness goals

without paying the cost of an in-person trainer.

With the growth in popularity of training apps, digital personal training services have emerged as a dominant new market in the fitness industry. It is crucial to note that virtual training is only in its infancy.

## 3. Mobile applications

The last emerging technology on our list is mobile applications. Today, health and fitness apps currently hold approximately 3% of the market share on the Google and Apple app stores. With the surge of smartphone usage, it is no wonder mobile fitness applications have experienced the most substantial amount of growth on our list. Smartphone users use their phones for everything, especially fitness. However, what is incredibly surprising is fitness apps had a projected growth of 7.6% between 2017 and 2022, as compared to other mobile apps. The disparity is astounding, which is why mobile apps are great tools for club owners to utilize to help increase engagement with customers, online class membership, and offer a better club experience.

The beauty of a mobile app is it can conveniently combine the first two items on this list into one technology solution. Through a well-designed app, members can register and view upcoming classes from the convenience of their smartphones, and they can take advantage of any virtual workout classes you have available as well. It also presents an opportunity to be a powerful tool for trainers, who can use the app to track the participant's workout history and progression overall, even when they are not in session. Having this sort of data-tracking capability enables trainers to give personalized training programs that keeps members engaged and on track towards their fitness goals beyond the confines of your club's walls.

## BIO

*EGYM is a global fitness technology leader that provides fitness and health facilities with intelligent workout solutions built on connected gym equipment and digital software. They can be contacted at: [egym.com/us](http://egym.com/us), (720) 900-2526 or [us-sales@egym.com](mailto:us-sales@egym.com)*

# With EGYM Your Club Gets

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EGYM offers an ecosystem of products customized to your clubs needs. Our combination of smart equipment, digital apps, software, and services, and our personalized training programs helps you turn member success into gym success. Scan the QR code to learn more. Or contact us at [us-sales@egym.com](mailto:us-sales@egym.com)

# EGYM

# **FITNESS INDUSTRY EMBRACING AI TO BOOST SALES AND LOYALTY**

BY HILARY MCGUCKIN

**A**rtificial intelligence is a game-changer for the fitness industry, with various operators benefiting from its adoption and immediate impact. While there has been much discussion about the practical applications and costs of AI technology, recent trends show more operators embracing AI-powered solutions to enhance team productivity in sales, retention, and content production.

It's essential to acknowledge that AI won't replace the personal interactions between gym staff and members. However, what AI can do is increase the capacity for staff to build and nurture these relationships.

By combining smart insights with the ability to automate and personalize communications, operators can simultaneously focus on member acquisition and retention. Sales teams can concentrate on nurturing hot leads, reducing costs and time-to-sale while increasing signups and profitability. Membership teams can enhance member experiences, leading to improved engagement and lifetime value. Marketing teams can now dedicate more time to creativity, fulfilling the core of their role.

Let's delve deeper into the benefits:

## **End-to-End Processes**

Having AI as an additional team member allows for more efficient use of existing resources. It can handle a large volume of sales and marketing activities without requiring an intricate understanding of its inner workings. Operators can effortlessly create end-to-end sales nurturing series and SEO-optimized content that attracts new prospects, all in a matter of minutes.

## **Cheaper Member Acquisition**

AI empowers marketing teams to identify ideal members accurately and create profiles, making it easier to attract similar members. Using generative AI, operators can produce

SEO-optimized content consistently and cost-effectively, reducing reliance on paid strategies.

## **Member Engagement... but personal**

AI can identify prospects likely to opt for premium packages or personal trainer sessions. Armed with preferences and interests from sign-up, operators can create automated, hyper-personalized communications that add immediate value and enhance the member's experience.

## **Retention on Autopilot**

AI enables fitness operators to analyze member behavior and set up marketing automations to keep members engaged. It can leverage first-party and zero-party data to create relevant, personalized messages that enhance member retention, all without requiring human intervention.

Incorporating AI into your fitness business is like adding an extra team member that boosts efficiency, reduces costs, and enhances both member acquisition and retention efforts. The benefits are tangible, and the tools are readily available for operators to harness AI's power effectively.

## **BIO**

*Keepme is the AI-powered platform revolutionizing the fitness industry. Leveraging artificial intelligence and data-driven insights, Keepme empowers fitness businesses to optimize member retention and boost revenue. It's comprehensive suite of solutions enables gyms to create on-brand content, hyper-personalize interactions, identify at-risk members and the leads most likely to close. Keepme's user-friendly interface and seamless connection to common CRMs and Member Management Systems make it a powerful tool for gyms of all sizes. With a relentless focus on delivering tangible results, Keepme is reshaping the way fitness centers engage with their members, driving success and growth in the ever-evolving fitness landscape.*

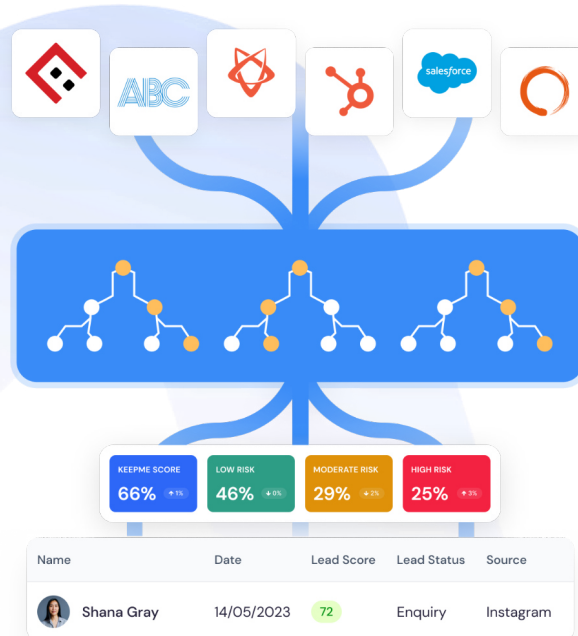


# More Sales. Less Churn.

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Boost membership sales and retention with a complete set of AI powered tools designed to unlock your member data. Predict membership churn, enhance your sales pipeline and member experience in one smart platform.



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Unlock the power of your existing member data in an insight-rich dashboard where you can manage leads and predict your sales funnel.

### Keepme Connect

The campaign management suite offers cutting edge marketing automation to create hyper-personalized communications to engage your club's audience at scale.

### Keepme Membership

Drive retention and revenue using predictive modelling to prevent churn and model your future business growth.

### NEW Keepme Creator

The fitness industry's first generative AI content production tool exclusively for fitness operators. Revolutionizes gym marketing content across blogs, social media and engagement emails. PLUS adaptive brand tone-of-voice learning.



[Book a demo at keepme.ai](https://keepme.ai)



# 'GENERATION ACTIVE' MEMBERS OFFER BIG OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

**G**en Z will have a bigger impact on the fitness market than any generation before, presenting a transformative opportunity for clubs to drive record growth.

That's according to "Gen Z Fitness: Cracking the Code" - a new global report examining Gen Z fitness habits, motivations to work out, and the barriers holding them back. The Les Mills report is the biggest-ever study into Gen Z fitness, combining insights from more than 4,000 young people aged 16 to 26 across North America, Europe and Asia.

Having helped shape a culture where fitness is a social media mainstay, Gen Z are frequently dubbed 'Generation Active' - 36% are already exercising regularly. But that's the tip of the iceberg. A further 50% of Gen Z want to work out regularly but need help getting started. Nurturing this untapped market requires an understanding of the challenges they face. Among non-exercisers, 68% want to start working out at home, so being able to provide high-quality digital options is essential for clubs.

Often caricatured as smartphone-obsessed social media addicts, Gen Z are not to be underestimated. While it's true they spend more time swiping than their elders ([55% use phones 5+ hours per day](#)), they're also more socially conscious and health-focused than any generation before, with an enlightened view of fitness. This is a generation working out for mental wellness, intrinsic motivation and the chance to be part of a community.

Four of Gen Z's top five reasons to exercise are linked to health and happiness, demonstrating a strong appreciation for the holistic benefits of activity. But they still want to look good, with 47% listing 'improving their appearance' as a key reason to work out. For club operators, providing choice for Gen Z is key to getting them through the front door. Of those working out regularly, 64% strongly agree they like to choose different workouts as well as discover new ones.

Understanding Gen Z's motivations, goals and values is key to earning their loyalty in their 20s, when most people decide whether to join a gym. 30% of Gen Z are already regularly working out in fitness facilities - a far higher figure than the total adult population, which typically ranges between 15-25%, depending on the market. And with 50% of Gen Z yet to start regularly exercising, there's a golden opportunity to engage more young people with club offerings that promote flexibility and choice.

With 72% of regular exercisers training both in and out of the gym, providing an Omnifitness experience

(comprising both live and digital workouts) which suits their lifestyle is a must. And when clubs strike the right balance right, Gen Z will stick around. Hybrid trainers are 40% more likely to have been a gym member for 3+ years compared to gym-only exercisers. They also manage to do 67% more workouts than gym-only exercisers (5.5 per week on average vs. 3.3).

Despite digital fitness options being more prevalent than ever, the report finds strong Gen Z demand for working out with others. Of all regular exercisers, 82% are getting their sweat on in the gym (up from 64% in 2021).

Given their appetite for connection, it's no surprise Gen Z are drawn to the supportive environment of the studio. 81% of Gen Z gym-goers take part in group workouts, citing the energy of the group, fast results and the guidance of an instructor as motivators.

Gen Z pay close attention to their wider wellness, with recovery and mindfulness group workouts featuring highly. Among Gen Z doing group workouts:

- 50% are doing strength training
- 35% are doing stretch / mobility
- 33% are doing yoga

When it comes to fitness apps, influencers are living up to their name. 71% of Gen Z use a fitness influencer's free digital platform inside the club, while 76% look to influencers for guidance at home. Gen Z consider an influencer to be anyone who represents a brand they're interested in - offering gyms significant opportunity to amplify their own star instructors. Shining a spotlight on the rockstars in your club's team is a recipe for creating authentic content that showcases the connection Gen Z are looking for.

For more, [access the free report](#) to uncover the must-have numbers, insights, and recommendations for achieving sustained success by winning with Gen Z.

## BIO

*Les Mills is the global leader in group fitness and creator of 20 programs available in leading fitness facilities around the world. The company was founded by a four-time Olympian and head coach of New Zealand's track and field team - who opened his first gym in 1968 with the aim of taking elite sports training to the masses. Today, Les Mills workouts are delivered by 130,000 certified instructors in 21,000 clubs across 100 countries and are available as live, livestream, virtual and immersive classes, as well as via the LES MILLS+ streaming platform.*



## **LES MILLS** Shapes

### **Low impact, high-intensity sculpt training**

Pilates and stretch are back in a big way with young members – the Gen Z Fitness: Cracking The Code 2023 report revealed these workouts to be in their top three most popular group fitness classes.

That's why we've designed LES MILLS SHAPES — a progressive boutique-style training program that brings the burn.

Win Gen Z over with a low impact, high intensity workout inspired by Pilates, Power Yoga and Barre. This addictive workout challenges muscles, develops core strength and improves postural alignment.

It's suitable for all abilities and has only one requirement – mastering the burn.

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Want to learn more? Get in touch today

[lesmills.com/us/shapes](https://lesmills.com/us/shapes)

# HOW TO STAY AHEAD OF THE FITNESS TECHNOLOGY CURVE FOR YOUR MEMBERS

Staying ahead of the curve when it comes to fitness technology is no longer a luxury - it's essential. As gym owners and fitness professionals, we're always looking for the next big thing that can give our members an edge and elevate our business. Heart rate training is a game-changing approach at the core of how a gym adds value for its community. But what makes it so special, and how can it transform your gym into a hub of innovation and member satisfaction?

## Personalize the member experience with wearable tech

The days of one-size-fits-all workouts are long gone. Today's fitness enthusiasts crave personalized experiences, and heart rate training delivers just that. With wearable devices like smartwatches and heart rate monitors, members can now track their heart rate in real-time, allowing them to tailor their workouts to their unique needs.

Imagine a member aiming to burn fat. With heart rate training, they can ensure they're exercising within the optimal heart rate zone for fat burning. Another member might be training for a marathon and can use the technology to stay in the endurance zone. The possibilities are endless, and the results? More effective workouts and happier members.

## New technology at the heart of gym design

The integration of heart rate training technology doesn't just benefit members - it's a huge draw point when it comes to gym design, too. With members using wearable devices, gyms can incorporate heart rate data displays, creating a more interactive and engaging environment.

Picture a studio class where participants compete to stay in their optimal heart rate zone, with real-time data projected on a screen. Not only does this foster a sense of community, but it also adds an element of gamification that keeps members coming back for more.

## Sales and marketing made easy

Heart rate training isn't just a fitness strategy; it's a marketing must-have. By offering heart rate-based classes or challenges, gyms can attract a new demographic of members who are tech-savvy

and results-driven. Plus, with the data collected from wearable devices, gyms can offer personalized promotions, such as discounts on advanced heart rate monitors or specialized training sessions. It's a win-win: members get value-added services, and gyms see an uptick in sales.

## Streamline operations and shape your business

The strategic implementation of heart rate training technology can also enhance gym operations. For instance, trainers can use members' heart rate data to design more effective group classes or one-on-one sessions. Additionally, gyms can leverage this data to assess the popularity of certain classes and adjust schedules accordingly. The result? A more efficient operation that meets members' needs head-on.

## Community at the core of every benefit

At its core, heart rate training fosters a sense of community that's bonded stronger than anything else. When members can share their progress, celebrate their achievements, and even engage in friendly competition, it creates a camaraderie that goes beyond the four walls of the gym. A strong community is the backbone of any successful fitness establishment.

## The future of your fitness family

Heart rate training, powered by the latest in wearable tech, is more than just a fitness trend - it's the future. For gym owners and fitness professionals, embracing this technology is not just an opportunity; it's an imperative. By integrating heart rate training into your gym's offerings, you're not only giving your members the tools to achieve their fitness goals but also positioning your business at the forefront of the fitness revolution.

Are you ready to let the heartbeat of modern fitness drive your gym's success?

## BIO

A veteran of the fitness industry, Terry Woods is VP Sales Americas at Myzone and can be reached at [terry.woods@myzone.org](mailto:terry.woods@myzone.org). For more information visit [www.myzone.org](http://www.myzone.org).



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# HOW ONLINE JOINING CAN BOOST YOUR HEALTH CLUB'S ENROLLMENT

Online joining capabilities with health club software can benefit club owners and operators in a number of ways.

## Convenience for all

One of the biggest benefits is that online enrollment is more convenient for potential members. Prospects and guests can join at their own accord, from the comfort of their own homes, from any device that has access to the internet. This can save time and hassle, and it can also make them more likely to enroll in a regular full membership or perhaps consider a trial option at the club.

## Improved customer service

Online enrollment can also improve customer service. When people can join online, they can review options and consider choices at their own pace, without having to wait in line or speak to a staff member. This can free up staff to focus on other tasks, and it can also make the existing members utilizing the facility feel more valued. Membership or trial offers can be linked from a website, blast emails, using QR codes, or from any social media marketing.

## Efficiency

Online functionality can also boost efficiency for the business by not having to process as many paper applications in-house, if not going 100% paperless. This can save time and money, and it can also help to improve data accuracy and reduce errors. Setting up an extra PC, iPad, or kiosk will also assist the desk staff.

## Increased revenue

Online capabilities will also increase revenue for the club. When people can join online, they are more likely to get started immediately and perhaps even add other services such as personal training, towels, lockers, and specialty classes. Many sites are seeing in excess of 20% of their new enrollments happen online.

## Data security

Online data is encrypted and stored securely to help protect personal information from unauthorized access. It can also reduce duplicate accounts from being created when cross-checking is automatic.

Overall, online capabilities with health club software will render many benefits for members, prospects, nonmembers, trainers, instructors, and facilities overall. If you are looking for ways to improve club operations and generate income, it is a great option to consider.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, online capabilities can also help to:

- Attract new members via the Guest and Refer a Friend options. They make it easier for prospects to learn about the club and sign up for a short-term or trial membership. This can help those who might not otherwise have considered joining.
- Increase member retention: Once a person gets started, they are prompted to download a customized and club-branded mobile app linked to the club management software membership information and services available. It will make it easier for those members with paid in advance memberships to renew as well. This will help retain members who might otherwise have canceled and consider staying as it improves member satisfaction and loyalty.

If you are looking to add online capabilities to your health club software, be sure to choose a solution that meets the needs of members, prospects, and your business. The additional revenue that is generated will easily cover the additional cost of the integration.

## BIO

*Carole Oat, a former large club operator for 15 years, is the National Sales Manager for Twin Oaks Software. She has a BA in Health & Fitness from Springfield College and has written & published numerous club management articles helping many business operators become successful. Carole Oat, National Sales Manager, 860-829-6000 x281, [coat@tosd.com](mailto:coat@tosd.com)*

# Maximize

## Profits + Member Retention



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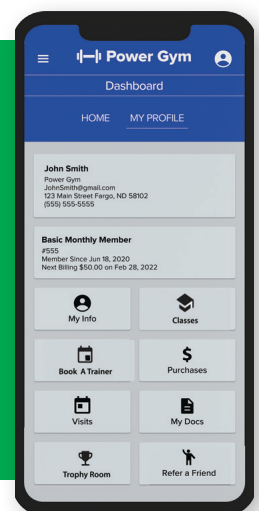


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