



FITNESS TRENDS 2021

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Introduction

2020-2021. We have either started to surf the waves in the constant tide of change or we have gotten caught in the undertow.

So, what has changed and is changing for our sector now and in the near future? Everything and nothing. The trends that were in place are still there, just accelerated to a pace that we never previously would have thought possible. For our sector, it's looking through the eyes of our members is the most important key to predict our future. Keeping a good balance of looking outwards and reflecting inwards will help us to maintain our perspective as we move forward.

The 4 interlocking domains that will drive the trends for 2021 and beyond are also the 4 areas of focus and commitment for Europe Active.

HEALTH

The factors that increased your risks for surviving COVID reinforced the importance of your health as a human and the factors within your control. Health and wellness will become a bigger driver than Fitness alone.

Fitness will become part of the bigger whole but no longer a stand-alone solution. Our members will be looking for more integrated solutions to manage their greater health strategies.

What's coming:

- Better communication with the medical community
- Cooperative initiatives with insurance companies
- New fitness profession profiles will emerge- Fitness & Health Specialist
- New services should be added to the club operator's product roadmap- Wellness, Coaching, Nutrition, Stress Management, Meditation

DIGITAL

If COVID-19 never happened we would be stuck with the early adopters slowly trickling towards our digital service offering. A global lockdown forced our customers to find new ways to get their workouts in. Many fitness professionals and companies raced to launch online options, compounding the messaging about the availability of this service. Our members tried our services, we reached new audiences because our ability to scale our service. For many members the digital service will never replace their in-person experience but they are enjoying the flexibility of the added options.

What's coming:

- Using digital fitness services to access hard to reach markets: people with disabilities, new to fitness, children, people with medical conditions
- Seamless integration of online/offline services- think NIKE in-store/app experience
- Sharing customers nicely by understanding that customers will often try different wellness services together and playing nicely in the sandbox together
- Europe Active's Digital Council will play a key role in sharing trends, learnings and best practices from all different sectors to ours

COMMUNITY

For many of our members and customers, being cut off from their community was the heaviest burden to bare. Because of the huge digital leaps that were made, some communities were successfully preserved in new channels.

The importance of the in-person experience has been a void for many of us for many months and it will be a huge opportunity for club operators to focus on their in-club experience when our doors are open again for good.

A health-check is coming for many sectors including ours. This health check will look at what unifies our communities. Inclusivity is a cornerstone for community. Diversity Equality and Inclusion (DEI) will be at the heart of our sector's community strategy for both members and employees alike.

The second community health check will look at our commitment to our world and will inspect our efforts and initiatives to help make it a better place.

What's coming:

- More gender balance in our sector in senior leadership roles
- Global action towards DEI awareness and initiatives such as Europe Active's Sectoral Charter on Inclusivity, Anti-Discrimination and Equal-Treatment
- More open dialogue, training and development for our leaders and employees on this topic

STANDARDS

These are invisible to many of our members but this has to change in order to make impactful steps for the coming years. We can no longer afford to operate in a place where anyone can call themselves a fitness professional. If we really want to be a part of the greater health strategy this will start with our commitment to the professionalisation of our sector. Our existing and potential customers need to know where to go for trusted information. They need to know what to look for and ask about when it comes to signing up for a service or hiring a coach or trainer. Medical professionals will need trust in our service before they will refer patients to us.

The COVID crisis has shown us just how important it is to prove that our facilities are safe places and are not contributing to the spread of infectious outbreaks. To this end, the CEN work that is already being done on Health and Safety Standards will be expanded and extended to protect our sector from scrutiny and unnecessary closures. This work and focus on these measures will continue to raise our credibility.

This is the part of our future that is truly in our hands at this moment. Making a commitment to the standards of our sector can help us accelerate our step from Fitness to Health and Wellness as quickly as we were able to make the digital pivot during the COVID crisis. To help more people to be more active more often we **MUST** make a commitment to our standards.

What's coming:

- An ISO-CEN Technical Specification providing guidelines on how our sector can stay open during and infectious outbreak.
- Continued work on an ISO-CEN Health and Safety Standard for the Fitness Sector that will define requirements for staffing and fitness club supervision
- Thousands more Fitness Professionals seeking accredited education and joining the EREPS register

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Jennifer is a C'Merican (you read that right- a North American hybrid) who, after living ten years in the Netherlands is officially Dutch. She is the Chief Operating Officer for WIFA (the Women in Fitness Association) by day and is a Europe Active Board member for many of the hours in between.

Twentyish years ago, she started her career as one of the (then) few female Personal Trainers and was able to turn her passion into a career by leading 2 of the Canadian market's largest PT Departments: Bally Total Fitness and GoodLife Fitness before convincing René Moos to make his best hiring decision ever in 2011. Since then, Jennifer led the Product Team at HealthCity and Basic-Fit as well as the Member Retention department.

After 10 years, it was time for change and Jennifer is proud to have joined WIFA's leadership team. In her spare time, (what's that?) she passionately contributes to the growth of our sector. She is co-creator of the WIFA L.E.A.D. Program (Leadership through Elevation Awareness and Discovery) program, a CEN workgroup member for our branch's Health and Safety Standard.

She derives her energy by fulfilling her purpose: **Connecting us with our strength and magic so that there's no such thing as impossible!**