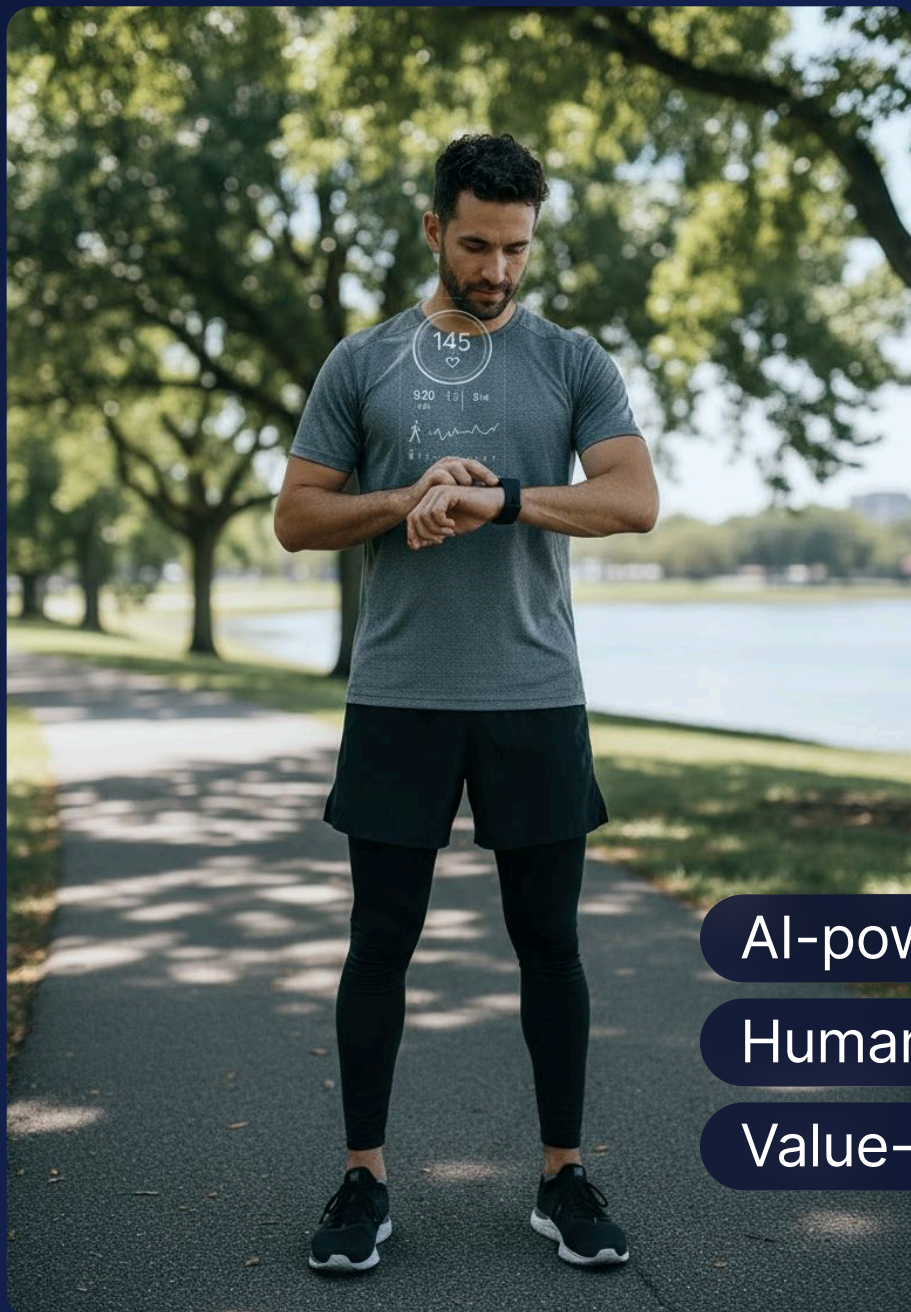


Future of Fitness:

Winning with Digital Value Creation



AI-powered.

Human-centered.

Value-driven.



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Karl Sandberg, Director of Delivery at Coherent Solutions

Executive summary



The future of fitness will belong to brands that treat modernization as an investment in digital value creation. Success won't come from more technology, but from ecosystems that are personalized, connected, and always on.

The fitness industry is entering a new era. Where memberships and in-club experiences once set the standard, today's leaders are competing in an environment where digital platforms, AI-driven personalization, and connected ecosystems define value. Consumers now expect seamless, holistic experiences. Operators are rethinking revenue models. Investors demand scalable and resilient strategies.

The global fitness market is projected to surpass \$257 billion in 2025. Much of this growth is concentrated in hybrid and digital-first models, as consumers blend in-person and online engagement. But growth alone does not guarantee sustainability. Operators and investors alike are asking: what creates lasting value in fitness?

This whitepaper argues that the answer lies in Digital Value Creation (DVC), Coherent Solutions' framework for aligning technology with the Human Performance Economy, and delivering specific business outcomes.

Igor Epshteyn
CEO of Coherent Solutions



DVC acts as the connective tissue for the following industry shifts:

1

Industry recovery and growth: A rebound anchored by hybrid models, investor diversification, and market consolidation.

2

Shifting expectations: Generational divides, the rise of wearables and apps, social fitness, workplace wellness, and longevity as a new dimension of value.

3

Innovation and technology: Real-time biometrics, AI coaching, and IoT ecosystems creating personalized engagement at scale.

4

Privacy and security: Trust and data protection as competitive differentiators.

5

Enterprise value: Digital investments driving revenue growth, retention, efficiency, and valuation uplift.

6

Strategic implications: How operators, investors, employers, and technology providers must adapt to thrive in this connected landscape.

Fitness is no longer just about exercise. It is becoming a lifestyle infrastructure for what Coherent Solutions calls the Human Performance Economy, encompassing recovery, nutrition, and mental health among many other factors.

Organizations that embrace Digital Value Creation will not only keep pace with all the change, they will define the future of fitness.



Current state of the fitness industry

The fundamentals of fitness haven't changed. What has changed is that technology is now inseparable from how people experience fitness.



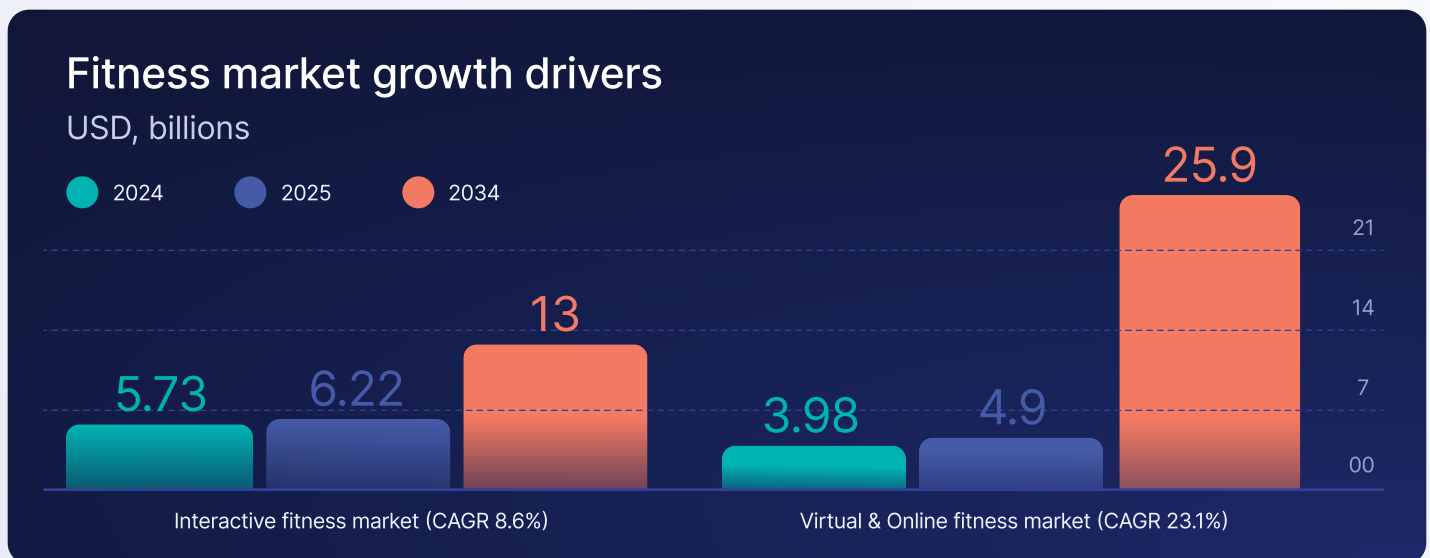
Igor Epshteyn
CEO of Coherent Solutions



Current state of the fitness industry

The pandemic permanently reshaped fitness. Global closures in 2020 pushed consumers into home workouts and digital platforms, establishing hybrid fitness as the new baseline. Members now expect seamless integration between the physical clubs and their digital platforms, along with flexibility in how and when they engage.

The result is a market on track to exceed \$257 billion in 2025, with traditional gyms and clubs accounting for approximately \$90 billion, while digital and hybrid services capture the fastest growth segments. Hybrid is no longer optional; it is the price of admission for relevance in today's market.



At the same time, investors are reshaping the landscape through diversification and consolidation.

Large-scale operators are expanding into nutrition, recovery, lifestyle services, and other wellness categories. Some fitness brands even maintain portfolios with spas, beauty, and various health brands, all designed to capture a greater share of consumer spending in the Human Performance Economy. This multi-brand, multi-service approach is rapidly becoming the industry standard.

As industry consolidation accelerates, mergers and acquisitions are becoming commonplace as investors seek scalable platforms. Digital maturity has emerged as a key determinant of enterprise value. Operators with proven digital platforms, strong retention metrics, and diversified revenue streams command premium valuations. Those still reliant solely on memberships face mounting pressure.

Right now, the industry is experiencing accelerated activity in mergers and acquisitions, and digital maturity is what drives valuation.



Karl Sandberg
Director of Delivery at Coherent Solutions

The industry has recovered, but the way fitness value is measured has changed. Today, growth requires digital-first strategies, ecosystem thinking, and the ability to deliver outcomes anchored to value creation.

Global expansion and international markets



The U.S. market, long the center of the fitness industry, is showing signs of saturation. Even as U.S. membership remains high (77 million Americans belong to a health club or studio), revenue growth is under pressure. Large chains face intensifying competition, as boutique studios and digital-first entrants fragment market share. The result is a crowded, competitive landscape where growth is harder to achieve.



Current state of the fitness industry

For many operators, consolidation is becoming the main path forward as mergers, acquisitions, and roll-ups are being used to reduce costs and compete more effectively. And, the next phase of value creation lies beyond U.S. borders for many operators and investors.

The European market, while large, remains fragmented. This opens opportunities for multinational operators to leverage proven models and build cross-border digital ecosystems that deliver consistent experiences while adapting to local markets and data privacy regulations. Investors also see potential for consolidation, and the organizations that unify experiences through digital platforms will gain a strategic advantage.

Did you know?

With government-led wellness initiatives and young, urban populations, the Middle East is emerging as one of the fastest-growing fitness markets in the world.

Meanwhile, the Middle East offers a market with significant growth potential. Penetration remains below 7% in Saudi Arabia, and is similarly low in the UAE, signaling substantial room for expansion. Nearly 74% of gyms in Saudi Arabia are independently operated, highlighting the potential for branded chains to scale. Combined with a young, urban population and government-led wellness initiatives, the region offers operators and investors substantial opportunities for growth and long-term loyalty.

However, international expansion and consolidation will need to be paired with stronger digital capabilities; that's how true value will be created. Growth is no longer simply about the number of clubs or the size of a portfolio; it requires the willingness to deliver experiences that resonate with members and can adapt as expectations change.

Shifting expectations and emerging trends

Most people only spend 3–5 hours a week in a gym. That leaves 160+ hours where their choices and habits are shaped by digital touchpoints. Modernization is about extending engagement into that 95% of the week.



Igor Epshteyn
CEO of Coherent Solutions

Consumer expectations are not just evolving; they are diverging across demographics.

Gen Z and younger millennials, raised as digital natives, see fitness as an extension of daily life that must be delivered through apps and wearables. For older adults, fitness decisions are more tied to preserving independence and their quality of life and tend to focus on mobility, strength, and longevity.

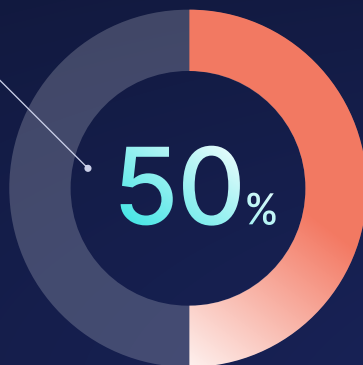
Tech-led personalization

Wearables are the top global trend for 2025, showing that technology-driven personalization is now the norm.

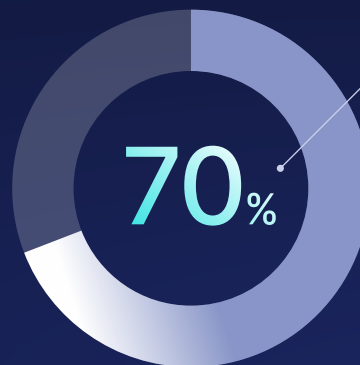
It should come as no surprise then that wearables and apps dominate current consumer trend lists. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) identified wearables as the top global trend for 2025, followed closely by mobile apps and strength training. For operators, this signals an expectation that technology-driven personalization will be standard, not optional.

Wearables adoption

Consumers purchased fitness wearables in 2024



Share of wearables dominating tracking in 2025



Wearables adoption: 50% of consumers purchased fitness wearables in 2024; wearables now dominate tracking with 70%+ share

Social fitness highlights that technology alone isn't enough. The success of running clubs, group challenges, and workplace wellness programs shows that many people exercise as much for community as for physical outcomes. During the pandemic, platforms like Peloton thrived not only because they offered classes, but because they created digital communities. Today, the demand for social connections has migrated back into clubs and hybrid models.

Hybrid is now a baseline. It's not just about the workout anymore; the community aspect is almost as important for many consumers.



Karl Sandberg
Director of Delivery at Coherent Solutions

Since engagement is the goal, gamification is emerging as a practical way to keep people coming back to digital fitness platforms. By incorporating challenges, milestones, and rewards, digital platforms can turn routine workouts into interactive experiences. Market analysts project the sector to grow from \$2.1 billion today to more than \$16 billion by 2033. This growth reflects a simple truth: people are more likely to stick with their fitness routines when they feel less like an obligation.

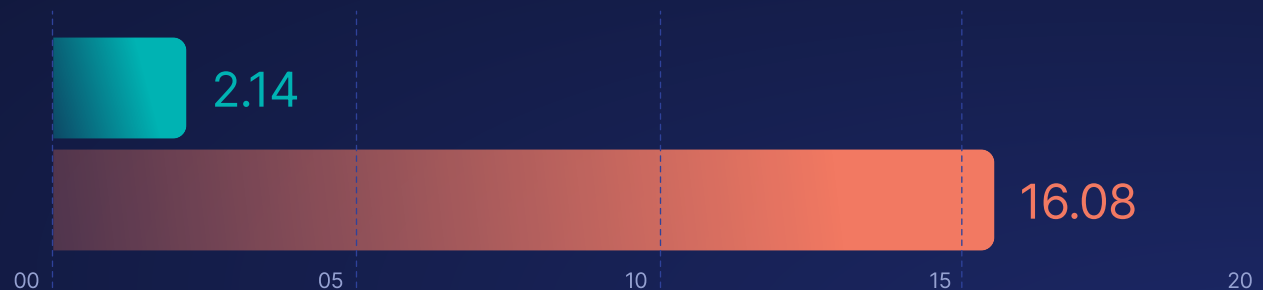


Gamification in fitness

USD, billions (CAGR ~24.1%)

2024

2033



AI-powered platforms

Case study

Creating a seamless ecosystem for members

A global fitness brand launched a unified digital ecosystem that integrated wearables, coaching, and CRM capabilities. The result was a 4.8-star rated app with nearly 200K+ reviews, proving that digital-first engagement drives real value. Read the full case study: [Digital Transformation of a Leading Fitness Brand | Case Study](#)

Longevity and health tracking are also redefining fitness value. Consumers are no longer satisfied with simply counting their steps or calories. They are increasingly turning to biomarker tracking, recovery scores, and personalized health insights. While still early, these trends reflect a growing convergence of fitness and healthcare.

For operators, digital platforms are emerging as central revenue streams. Beyond memberships, businesses are monetizing content, coaching, e-commerce and subscription-based services; while workplace partnerships, and hybrid offerings expand markets beyond the club walls.

Taken together, these trends illustrate a new definition of value: fitness as a holistic wellness journey that blends exercise, recovery, nutrition, and mental health into a seamless experience.





Innovation spotlight: Advanced technologies



Technology is reshaping fitness, but the real opportunity lies in integration.

Real-time biometrics and AI coaching are becoming standard in both home and club environments. Devices that track heart rate, recovery, and form provide instant feedback, enabling safer and more personalized training. AI-driven coaching adapts to individual needs, offering a tailored experience once reserved for elite athletes.

IoT-driven integration is extending the reach of fitness ecosystems as equipment, apps, and wearables increasingly enable seamless data flows across a user's main environment. This integration ensures that consumers experience continuity across environments, providing operators with access to rich data to drive personalization and retention.

The long-term impact comes from connecting ecosystems, not individual gadgets. It's about linking your home, your gym, your apps, and your workplace wellness program together into a continuous experience.



Igor Epshteyn
CEO of Coherent Solutions

Case study

Consistency at scale across 5,000+ locations

To support global expansion, a fitness franchise rolled out a digital solution to enable consistent experiences across more than 5,000 locations worldwide. The system showed how digital platforms can support growth at scale. Read the full case study: [Digital Fitness Solution Case Study | Software for Fitness Franchise](#)

Connected ecosystems represent a long-term opportunity. The real value is not in any single gadget, but in how devices, apps, and platforms combine into holistic ecosystems that scale. A consumer's wearable data connects to their club's training platform, which integrates with nutrition tracking, which syncs to corporate wellness benefits. This is the model that creates lasting engagement, loyalty, and measurable business value.



By contrast, exploratory technologies such as smart apparel, AR/VR fitness, and blockchain-based solutions remain niche. While they may evolve into useful tools, they are not yet core to digital value creation. The focus for operators and investors should remain on proven technologies that can integrate into scalable ecosystems.



Privacy and security



In an increasingly connected environment, consumer trust is a competitive advantage for brands. Personalization only works if consumers feel confident about how their data is managed.

Privacy and security are so important. People want to know who has access to their data and how it's shared. For some, trust will be the deciding factor in whether they stay with a platform.



Karl Sandberg
Director of Delivery at Coherent Solutions

Security vulnerabilities are a persistent concern. Wearables, connected equipment, and mobile apps all represent potential entry points for data breaches. High-profile security incidents in other industries have made consumers wary of sharing personal information without assurance of protection.

That's why balancing personalization with privacy is critical. While consumers expect tailored experiences, they are increasingly willing to abandon platforms that they perceive as careless with their data. Platforms engineered with clear consent models, transparent policies, and robust security embedded will stand apart.

For some consumers, data protection may not be a top priority. For others, it will be the deciding factor in adoption and retention. Either way, organizations that fail to treat privacy as a core part of the value proposition will struggle to compete.

Trust as a
differentiator

Personalization only works when members feel
confident about how their data is managed.

Enterprise value of digital fitness investments

Digital modernization isn't optional; it's the baseline for relevance. It's not about piling on tools, but about creating connected ecosystems that drive loyalty, efficiency, and growth.



Igor Epshteyn
CEO of Coherent Solutions



Enterprise value of digital fitness investments

Digital transformation in fitness is no longer about experimenting with new tools; it is about proving measurable business outcomes. Operators, investors, and employers now demand evidence that digital strategies generate sustainable returns. Within this context, the Digital Value Creation (DVC) framework from Coherent Solutions provides a way to evaluate which investments can offer a real impact:

Revenue growth:

Hybrid and digital-first models expand addressable markets and enable diversified revenue streams.

Customer lifetime value (CLV):

Retention is the industry's Achilles' heel. Members frequently swap out between providers.

Operational efficiency:

Automation and AI optimize staffing, scheduling, and resource allocation, producing lower operating costs while improving service quality.

Consolidation and M&A:

Digital maturity directly impacts valuation. Operators with proven digital platforms and diversified revenue streams command premium multiples in acquisitions.

Retention and lifetime value matter, because members switch providers all the time.



Karl Sandberg

Director of Delivery at Coherent Solutions

Simply put, organizations that embrace DVC achieve higher revenue, stronger retention, lower costs, and more favorable valuations. Those that don't embrace the concept risk being marginalized in a consolidating industry.

Strategic implications for businesses

I'm seeing more and more of this shift toward fitness plus recovery, nutrition, and lifestyle services. Operators are building whole ecosystems — not just exercise, but the full health and wellness experience.



Karl Sandberg
Director of Delivery at Coherent Solutions



The forces outlined previously affect every stakeholder in the ecosystem including operators, investors, employers, and technology providers. To succeed:

1

Operators must embed hybrid integration as standard, expand into wellness ecosystems, and focus retention strategies on personalization and community.

2

Investors should prioritize digital maturity, retention metrics, and ecosystem integration in valuation and M&A strategies.

3

Employers represent a rising growth channel, as workplace wellness becomes a differentiator in recruitment and productivity. Partnerships with digital-first providers enable scalable benefits.

4

Technology providers must act as partners, not vendors. Success depends on delivering measurable business outcomes and building trust.

Safeguarding continuity during consolidation

During a fitness industry merger, IT integration was critical to preserve operational continuity and member trust. By aligning systems quickly and securely, the merged organization successfully showed why digital maturity is a critical factor in M&A success.

Read the full case study: [Creating Digital Value in a Fitness Industry Merger](#) | Case Study

Looking to the future of fitness

Less than 30% of tech businesses succeed with digital transformation strategies. On their bumpy roads to success, many zero in on adopting more technologies, mistakenly viewing that as a silver bullet for digital transformation. But solely solving technology problems is not enough. Businesses should overhaul their strategies, processes, and mindsets to ride the wave of digital transformation.



Igor Epshteyn
CEO of Coherent Solutions



Fitness is no longer just about exercise. As McKinsey recently noted, members are not simply buying workouts, they now expect fitness, recovery, nutrition, and mental health to be integrated. This integrated mindset is the driving force behind what Coherent Solutions defines as the Human Performance Economy.

Operators that remain siloed will face obsolescence. Those that create secure and personalized ecosystems will capture enduring consumer trust and market share.

Digital Value Creation is the framework for this future. It ensures that fitness organizations can:



Attract and retain members through personalized, community-driven engagement.



Optimize operations through data-driven efficiency.



Unlock new revenue streams beyond memberships.



Strengthen resilience in a consolidating industry.

The future of fitness is AI-powered, human-centered, and value-driven. Organizations that embrace Digital Value Creation will not just adapt to the industry's transformation; they will define it.



We are the tech muscle behind digital fitness success



No hype. Just the right digital tools for your model, your goals, your users. From apps to infrastructure, we help you turn complexity into progress.

CONNECT WITH OUR TEAM

Next steps for your business



Remember, transformation doesn't happen all at once. What matters most is building momentum and using what you learn to keep refining your strategy.



Digital transformation is an ongoing process of experimentation and learning. The goal is to create an ecosystem where technology drives growth, not just supports it. To accomplish this, you need to:

1

Look honestly at your digital maturity and evaluate how effectively your technology connects across your organization.

2

Focus on connecting your systems and customer interactions to create a seamless experience from start to finish.

3

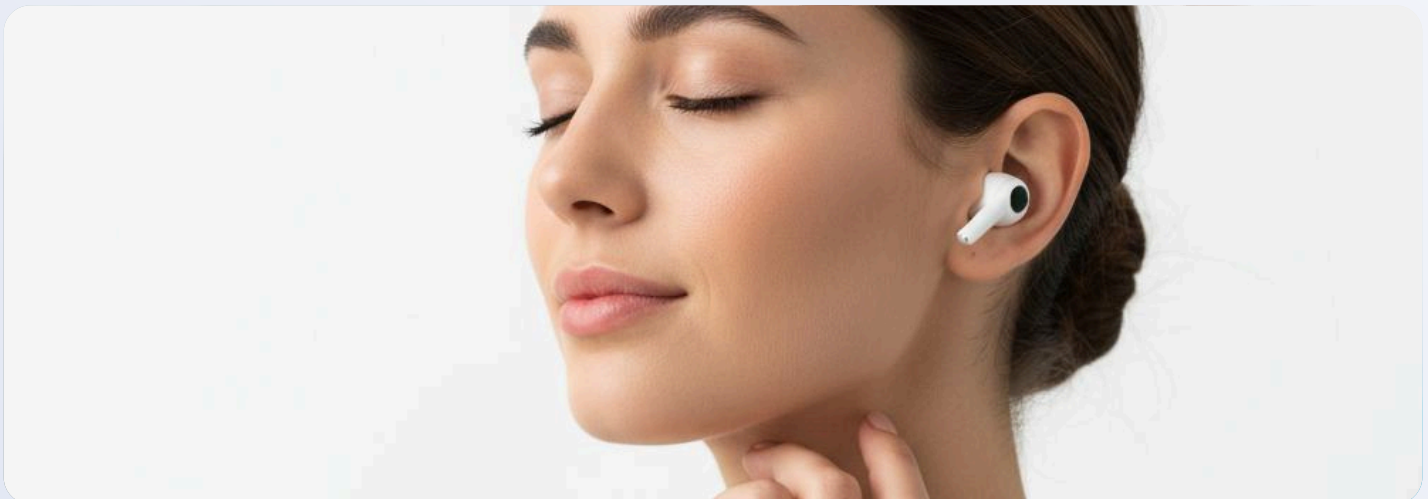
Make privacy and transparency part of your brand promise, not just a compliance exercise.

4

Experiment with AI-driven personalization or gamified experiences on a small scale. Measure what works, invest in what delivers value, and cut what doesn't.

5

See where your digital investments are creating real value and let those results guide your next move.



How ready is your business to take the next step?



Deals are getting bigger, apps are being overloaded, and competitors are growing faster. Old tech stacks can't keep up.

Use these questions to guide an internal discussion about where your organization stands and where to focus next:



Where are your digital initiatives creating measurable business impact and where are they falling short?



How well do your privacy and transparency practices build member trust?



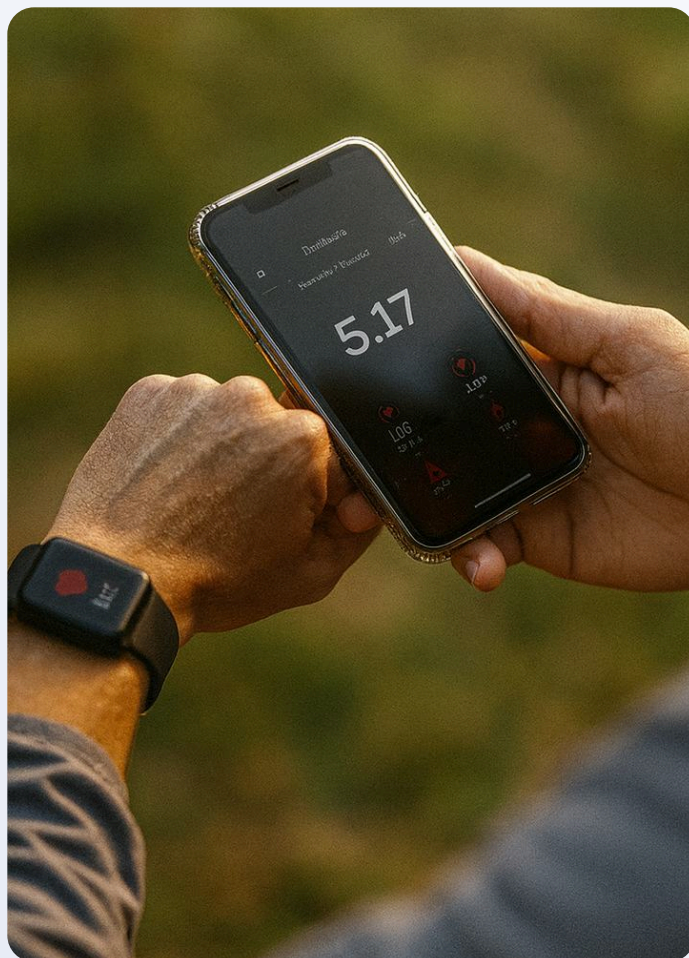
How does your digital maturity shape your ability to grow and attract investment?



How seamless is the experience for members moving between in-club and digital environments?



What would it take to turn your data into a true foundation for personalized engagement?



Thank you

Thank you for reading The Future of Fitness: Winning with Digital Value Creation.

At Coherent Solutions, our teams have spent thousands of hours building digital platforms that help fitness brands, mobile apps, and connected devices compete and grow. Through this experience, we've developed a deep understanding of how to turn technology and data into measurable business value centered on the user experience.

We're ready to help your organization take the next step with AI-powered, human-centered software that delivers meaningful results.

To learn more about Coherent Solutions' work in the fitness sector and how we apply Digital Value Creation across industries, visit the [Fitness Industry](#) and [Digital Value Creation](#) sections of our website. You can also explore our [case studies](#) to see how we've helped leading fitness companies create lasting value through digital innovation.

Contributing experts:

[Igor Epshteyn, Founder & CEO](#)

[Karl Sandberg, Director of Delivery](#)

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