Influences of the Boutique Fitness Industry and Solutions for your Gym
Impact of the growing boutique sector

Consumers are increasingly focusing on personal health and wellbeing. In 2016 approximately 7.1 million people in England were taking part in keep fit and gym activities - 1.3 million more than in 2008 (Sport England Active People Survey 10). With the rise of low-cost, ‘pay-as-you-gym’ and boutique studios over the past few years, the UK health and fitness market has become increasingly diverse and as a consequence, is attracting a wider audience. The boom in boutique studios is a particularly exciting development for the sector. A key component to the success of boutique studios, both in the UK and globally, is providing a specialised, flexible and exhilarating fitness experience, that promises to deliver results.

Often with a small client base, boutique or specialist studios aim to provide customers with a sense of belonging that can help create a more pleasurable health and fitness experience. As a result, gym operators are having to find new and innovative ways to keep current customers dedicated and loyal, as well as attracting new ones. In order to do so, a number of mainstream operators have expanded their offering into the boutique market, with public operator Fusion Lifestyle creating ‘INTENCITY’ studios (HIIT) in 2015, budget operator PureGym launching ‘Pure Ride’ in January 2016 (Cycle), which was subsequently sold to Digme Fitness, and premium gym operator Third Space developing ‘Another_Space’ in April 2016 (HIIT, Yoga and Cycle).
Creating a boutique experience in a mainstream heath and fitness club

Customers come to boutique studios with expectations of receiving a specialist exercise regime, taught by an expert, that will help them achieve their desired fitness outcomes. In today’s market, time is limited, with customers wanting intelligent workouts that maximise fitness outcomes. Unique, authentic and meaningful experiences fuel customer loyalty in boutiques. A number of factors identified in Clubintel’s 2016 guide on how to leverage the power of the boutique experience should be considered when seeking to create a boutique experience. These include:

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<th>SPECIALISM</th>
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<td>Boutique provide specialist activities that are difficult to replicate. Attendees are taught by an expert, who is the best at their activity. This can be perceived by customers as an indicator that they are passionate about what they do, have greater knowledge, focus and are more likely to deliver quality.</td>
<td>Boutiques do not follow a typical membership model, with customers paying premium pay-as-you-go prices. There is no burden of a monthly or annual membership and the higher than average price point places a tangible value on each individual member visit.</td>
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<td>By encouraging customers to form networks or tribes, a greater bond can form between customers and the boutique. This can lead to greater customer loyalty and retention, as participants emotionally connect to the brand. This in turn may contribute to the likelihood of long-term prosperity.</td>
<td>By operating asset light, boutiques often have lower operating costs, enabling them to invest in human capital and focus on extracting maximum value from the business. This model enables boutiques to set up new locations quickly, and to concentrate time and resource into innovation.</td>
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<th>HIGH-TOUCH AND RESULTS DRIVEN</th>
<th>QUICK AND AGILE DECISION MAKING</th>
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<td>Boutique provide a high-touch offering where consumers feel their fitness needs are understood by their instructor. The instructor is viewed as part of the customer’s fitness journey providing guidance, support and motivation.</td>
<td>A further benefit of boutiques having lower operating costs and a lower level of risks is that decisions can be made quickly without having significant adverse impact on the organisation.</td>
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<th>TIMING &amp; CONVENIENCE</th>
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<td>The trend towards buying local has proliferated the boutique fitness sector. By being local, products and services exude an authentic sentiment. Developing a close relationship between the brand and customers helps to cultivate this feeling.</td>
<td>Boutiques are able to locate themselves in urban areas, close to where people work and live, and offer multiple sessions per day. Moreover, technological advances such as mobile apps and online booking systems conveniently enable customers to book classes remotely on devices.</td>
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<td>Though not essential, boutiques who have a recognised leader who engages and inspires customers are able to flourish in a competitive market. Examples of iconic leaders could include Boom Cycle’s Hilary Gilbert, and Soul Cycle’s Elizabeth Cutler and Julie Rice.</td>
<td>Through delivering sessions where customers simply have to follow the instructor, customers are able to fully immerse themselves into the workout without having to determine how to maximise their performance. This creates experiences that are entertaining, exhilarating and intuitive.</td>
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How Precor can help you

Boutique gym experiences and specialised training sessions are continually being demanded by members. Recognising the importance of this, leading fitness equipment manufacturer and supplier Precor is in an unparalleled position to support you in providing these services through premium, innovative fitness solutions and unrivalled service and maintenance support that help create the best environment for your members.

With the popularity of functional training growing and the demand for adaptable training options increasing, the addition of Queenax™ functional training to the Precor product portfolio provides operators with the training options exercisers are looking for whilst maximising floor space. The Queenax functional training unit can be adapted to fit any space, making it possible for both large and small gyms to offer a boutique experience and a personal touch.

Alongside this Precor also has a passionate focus on ergonomic motion, extensive research and superior engineering; looking to continually innovate and create advances in the fitness industry with breakthrough new product categories, which so far include the EFX® Elliptical Crosstrainer, Adaptive Motion Trainer® “AMT®” and Preva® Networked Fitness.

For group exercise and specialised training, Precor’s partnership with Spinning®, the world leader in indoor cycling, provides the ideal solution. Spinning®, the world’s number one brand, is proud and storied, with a reputation for delivering more than an indoor ride – it’s a carefully crafted experience, creating a strong following and sense of community. The Spinner® family of bikes, along with the new Spinner® Chrono™ Power, have been uniquely designed to enhance this experience with both operators and exercisers in mind.

Precor’s commitment to delivering personalised health and fitness experiences enables customers to connect with their members and help them achieve their goals. Precor has been doing this for more than 35 years and will continue to focus on offering excellent solutions and service for its customers.
A limitation for operators offering a boutique experience or specialist classes within their gym is space (or rather the lack of it). Versatile equipment offers a solution to fitness facilities looking to utilise studio space to create a dynamic and exciting workout. Whatever space you have available, a Queenax™ unit can be selected to deliver maximum use of that area. With fully personalised configurations, the Queenax can be installed in any space, no matter how large or small.

Once you have chosen the ideal Queenax solution for your gym, the functional training and class options are extensive. Precor Master Coaches also offer Queenax education packages, which enable clubs to run a number of specialised classes including Boost, Monkey Bar Masters, Team, Core and Metabolic Fit. The versatility of the unit means you can transform the space for multiple uses, changing from hanging apparatus add-ons to deliver anti-gravity yoga classes to a completely clear space to run Spinning® classes in the same room.

**Solutions personalised for you**

- **Wall Solution**
  - For the space conscious the wall unit can transform your empty wall into a functional training and storage facility.

- **Open Format**
  - The Open Format is perfect for when space is not a limitation and offers full 360 degree access to all training stations.

- **The Corner**
  - The Corner unit maintains the functionality of the larger units but can be installed in a confined space.

- **The Bridge**
  - The Bridge unit spans an entire room to add more options and training stations to your Queenax whilst still using minimal floor space.

- **The One**
  - For those where empty space is a real premium, the One unit can fit into even the smallest of spaces.
Current customer solutions

We visited four different gyms and leisure centres to see why they chose to install a Queenax™ unit, which system they implemented and how it is being used within the day to day life of the club. Each of the facilities are in different settings and have different requirements, but all found the Queenax to be the solution to their individual needs.

1. Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, Lancaster
   A busy local authority leisure centre that has recently undergone a renovation, including a complete redesign of the gym.

2. Xcite Livingston, West Lothian
   A leisure centre housing the world's largest Queenax unit whilst still retaining studio space for all kinds of classes.

3. life:lab, Chislehurst
   A new gym in Kent offering high end equipment and specialised small group training, with limited space on site.

4. Anytime Fitness, Luton
   A 24 hour gym located within a shopping centre. Members can access the gym at all times so need fitness solutions they can use independently.
Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, Lancaster

**Where?**

Salt Ayre Leisure Centre in Lancaster is a council operated site covering over 6,500 square metres, with an extensive range of indoor and outdoor facilities. These include a swimming pool, sports hall, indoor climbing wall, flight tower, athletics track, bike track and an extensive health and fitness suite. Salt Ayre has recently undergone an extensive renovation, including a complete reconfiguration of the centre's layout. Two Queenax units have been installed as part of the redevelopment.

**Why Queenax?**

**Fulfilled multiple customer needs**
Salt Ayre centre management felt the Queenax fulfilled multiple customer needs - strength, flexibility and core - in one versatile, flexible unit.

**Effective use of space**
Staff were aware they needed to use the space they had in an efficient and effective manner. The Queenax was viewed as an option that would allow a huge variety of exercises to be carried out, whilst maintaining floor space for existing activities.

**Improved offering for members**
Management also felt the Queenax would increase the offering to members and, in turn, grow the membership base and increase revenue by offering affordable, modern, full body exercise options. The Queenax would also open up opportunities for a new range of classes to offer customers.

“We installed the Queenax to increase our customer offering and offer affordable, modern full body exercise”
Centre Management, Salt Ayre

“**The Queenax™ is eye catching and has generated huge interest from customers**”
Centre Management, Salt Ayre
Which units were chosen?

Salt Ayre installed two Queenax units:

**The Bridge**
The larger unit is based in a downstairs functional fitness room, previously an archery hall. The Bridge was the ideal choice as it spans the width of this long, narrow room, utilising the wall space while leaving the whole length of the room accessible.

**Open Format**
The main fitness studio has an Open Format Queenax functional training unit, enabling members to train all around it. This also makes it ideal for group exercise classes using the unit.

How is Queenax used?

Salt Ayre has scheduled specialised classes using the Queenax units. Group sessions on offer include:

◊ BOOST - Beginners Functional Training
◊ METCON - Metabolic Conditioning
◊ STRENGTH & TONE - Strength & Core
◊ TEAM FIT - Partner based Functional Training

Outside of these classes, members can use the units independently. Gym instructors are fully trained in using the equipment and encourage members to incorporate exercises on the Queenax into their everyday fitness routines. Personal Trainers also incorporate exercises on the Queenax into their clients’ routines. The Open Format means that many different user groups can access the Unit at the same time.

"The group training sessions on the Queenax are fantastic! 30 mins of the hardest workout and you feel amazing! I know I can come in and do a worthwhile workout, even if I only have a short amount of time"

Salt Ayre member

"Having the Queenax in the gym means I can add onto my workout and focus on areas I want to improve"

Salt Ayre member
"We feel the Queenax adds another dimension to training"
Centre Management, Salt Ayre

What Queenax apps are used?
Salt Ayre have invested in a wide range of Queenax add-ons to further increase the range of exercises available. These include:
◊ TRX®
◊ Up Strength
◊ Superfunctional training bar
◊ Punching bag
◊ Plyometric Platform
◊ Torso Trainer
◊ Mobile Parallels
◊ Battle Rope

What do the staff think?
Staff feedback has been positive, with trainers reporting that the Queenax generates significant interest from customers of all ages and abilities. Staff using the Queenax say the training has enabled them to use the unit to its full potential and report that the small group classes create a ‘team effect’ where motivation to workout is high.

What do customers think?
Since installing the Queenax units, all abilities and age groups have embraced the new equipment. Salt Ayre has reported an even split between male and female users. Customer feedback has been positive, with members commenting that the new gym layout, including the Queenax, is appealing and eye catching. In a typical week, Salt Ayre records over 800 attendances to classes using the Queenax Unit.

"I attended a class on the Queenax with Sam. He is a great teacher, and the new equipment meant that all different fitness levels could workout together"
Salt Ayre member

"We feel the Queenax adds another dimension to training"
Centre Management, Salt Ayre
Where?

life:lab Chislehurst is a 3,000 square foot facility converted from squash courts that were part of a rugby club. It is based on a science theme and offers both personal training and small group classes.

There are two main exercise rooms (energy:lab and body:lab) and a further room, mind:lab, where workshops are held. Both the two main rooms house a Queenax unit.

Why Queenax?

Storage

The inbuilt storage was an important factor for life:lab. With limited additional space, the Queenax offers an attractive and efficient way of storing equipment within the main workout unit.

Visual Impact

life:lab staff believe the Queenax is an innovative and aesthetically impactful piece of equipment that provides a visually stunning centrepiece, creating a talking point to draw in new customers.

High quality

The units fit perfectly with life:lab’s ethos of providing top quality equipment in order to provide unique and varied workouts for members. The life:lab owners wanted their equipment to be of the highest quality and standard and say the Queenax fulfils this requirement.

"The Queenax™ immediately creates an impact on any potential members when they walk into the group room”

Co-owner, life:lab

“...is an innovative, aesthetically impactful piece of equipment that provides a sensible and efficient storage solution”

Co-owner, life:lab
The Queenax offers a bold visual statement and provides wow factor

Personal Trainer, life:lab

Which units were chosen?

The One
With space at a premium life:lab installed bespoke One units mounted on opposite walls of the main energy:lab room. These span the length of the room on either side, leaving the middle area completely free. This allows classes to be run at any time without having to clear any equipment away. They offer the perfect combination of efficient storage and a platform for exercises using the frame, such as with TRX equipment.

The Corner
A smaller corner unit was installed in the body:lab room, which is mainly used for personal training.

“The Queenax provides a unique selling point to potential new members”
Co-owner, life:lab

How is Queenax used?

The Queenax is used during personal training sessions and during group Tribe Team Training. This includes classes such as:

◊ TribeFit- High Intensity Functional Fitness
◊ TribeLife- Low Impact Functional Fitness
◊ Tribe- CORE
◊ HiIT- High Impact Interval Training

"The Queenax offers a bold visual statement and provides wow factor"
Personal Trainer, life:lab
What Queenax apps are used?
The unit is used for storing a wide range of equipment. The following apps and storage solutions are utilised by life:lab:

◊ TRX®
◊ Horizontal Disc Shelf
◊ Combi Storage
◊ Wall bars
◊ Pull up bar

What do the staff think?
The staff at life:lab feel the Queenax has a real visual impact and said everyone who walks into the energy:lab room comments on how exciting the units look. They believe having the Queenax offers a unique selling point for prospective new members. The Queenax has been fully incorporated into day to day usage by both personal trainers taking individual sessions and coaches leading group classes. It has enabled the development of some exciting new small group training sessions.

What do customers think?
life:lab receives around 1,000 visits per month, predominately for small group training sessions. There is a high rate of repeat visits with life:lab amassing a loyal core of followers in a short space of time. The sessions attract a wide range of attendees, with the equipment allowing all abilities to take part without restrictions.

"In the main team training room, the arrangement of clean, professional and varied equipment looks massively impressive lined up on the walls"
life:lab member

"The group training sessions are absolutely amazing and you get that personal attention throughout the session"
life:lab member
Xcite Livingston, West Lothian

"Housing the Queenax™ Bridge within our Studio provides Xcite Livingston with a unique environment for our customers to exercise in with endless training possibilities"
Manager, Xcite Livingston

Where?
Xcite Livingston is a large leisure centre, with facilities including pools with flumes and slides, and an extensive gym with a wide range of equipment. A recent refurbishment saw the centre create access to the gym floor from an existing studio space and install the world’s largest Queenax unit, at 15.5m long, in the studio.

Why Queenax?
Evolving trends: Increased demand for functional training
Xcite recognises customers are changing the way they train and the Queenax was viewed as the ideal piece of equipment to fulfil the growing demand for functional training and HIIT group exercise. The versatility of the unit allows a wide variety of classes to take place which improves Xcite’s membership offering.

Maximise use of fitness studio
A main aim was to maximise use of the fitness studio without taking away any floor space. The Queenax was installed in what would otherwise be wasted space. The unit spans the walls and ceiling of the studio, meaning no equipment had to be removed to allow for the installation, and the studio can still be used as a conventional training space.

State of the art equipment
Choosing Queenax means customers have access to the latest state of the art functional training solution and can take part in new classes only possible with the Queenax.

"The system was installed to make the most effective use of the centre’s fitness studio by offering a wide variety of exercise classes and the latest functional training solutions to customers, without sacrificing floor space"
Manager, Xcite Livingston

The Bridge Queenax Unit
The Bridge
Xcite Livingston has the prestige of housing the largest Queenax unit in the world. Following successful experiences with the Queenax at three other Xcite locations, Xcite Livingston installed an X4 1500 Bridge unit measuring almost 16 metres in length. The unit spans the entire length of the reconfigured studio and was custom built to fit the space. Its size means the possibilities for individual and group exercise are immense. With 32 individual stations, the capacity for classes is high and even outside of scheduled class times a large number of people can use the unit simultaneously.

How is Queenax used?
The Queenax is used both independently by members and as part of scheduled classes. The following classes are on offer at Xcite:

◊ Queenax Aerial Yoga - using the hammock add on
◊ Queenax Core
◊ Queenax Metabolic Fit
◊ Queenax Functional
◊ Queenax Box - with the 30kg punch bag

Customers can also use the Queenax as part of open timetabled sessions where staff are on hand to show them how to use the kit and accessories. The installation of the Queenax has also allowed a new Ninja Warrior style class to be introduced for 8-15 year olds. When the Queenax is not in use, the space can be used as a traditional studio, with equipment stored out of the way within the unit.

“We wanted to be able to give everyone the chance to use the Queenax so we programmed in ‘Queenax Open Sessions’ which allow our Gym customers direct access from the gym floor to the existing studio”
Manager, Xcite Livingston

"Staff received two days training on effective use of the unit”
Manager, Xcite Livingston
What Queenax apps are used?

The Queenax unit at Xcite has a wide range of additional apps available for use. These include apps specifically for Queenax classes, such as Aerial Yoga.

◊ TRX®
◊ Pull up bar
◊ Rebounder
◊ Battle rope
◊ Punching bags
◊ AntiGravity® Hammock Kit
◊ Suspension Ab Kit
◊ UFO suspended platform

What do the staff think?

Staff using the unit received two days specialist training on how to use the Queenax to its full potential and have gone on to deliver a wide range of classes, as well as show members how to use the unit in their own exercise regimes. Xcite staff believe the Queenax delivers an excellent customer experience whilst giving the competitive edge over other gyms in the area.

What do customers think?

A variety of members now use the Queenax, either on their own or during scheduled classes. Since installation, Xcite Livingston has seen an increase of 6% in class attendances, with over 1,800 visits to Group Fitness classes per month. The versatility of the unit means classes have been included to cover all ages, abilities and exercise preferences.

"My overall fitness has improved and I feel the benefit of regular exercise using the Queenax classes"
Member, Xcite Livingston

"You get the feeling that no matter what your fitness level is there is something for everyone"
Member, Xcite Livingston
Anytime Fitness, Luton

Where?
Anytime Fitness Luton is a 24 hour gym located on the upper floor of a shopping centre in central Luton. Members can access the gym at all times using a key fob. The gym is manned by staff and personal trainers during key daytime hours. The Queenax was installed ahead of the gym opening in September 2016. The gym also has one studio for classes and spinning and an open plan weights and cardio area.

“The Queenax™ was picked to accompany our state of the art equipment”
Manager, Anytime Fitness

Why Queenax?
Achieve fitness goals
The staff at Anytime Fitness are dedicated to giving members the best possible opportunity to achieve their fitness goals and felt the Queenax fitted into their planned suite of state of the art fitness equipment.

Challenge ‘normal’ workouts
The Queenax was seen as a piece of equipment that could challenge a normal day to day workout and go beyond what gym users would be used to. The unit could provide the functionality for a whole body workout.

Provide something new
The Queenax was also chosen as it provided something different that many members had not used before. It was thought that this would spark interest and attract new members.

“Queenax gives the functionality for a full body work out with the ability to mix up and challenge a normal day to day workout”
Manager, Anytime Fitness
Personal Trainer, Anytime Fitness

The Queenax training was really good and taught me a whole range of activities I can use with clients.

Open Format

The gym has a medium sized freestanding Open Format Queenax unit installed in a central area of the gym, slightly set back from the main weights and cardio area. Positioned in the main part of the gym, it is the first thing members notice when they walk into the area. Its free-standing nature means members can access it from all sides. The unit is positioned with plenty of space around it, which can be used to add apps such as punchbags and trampettes.

Which units were chosen?

"The Queenax offers confidence to the members as they are seeing better results compared to the results they have seen in previous gyms they have attended"

Manager, Anytime Fitness

How is Queenax used?

Anytime Fitness offers monthly challenges using the Queenax, which take the form of circuit classes, incorporating a range of key exercises using the unit. Staff are also on hand to demonstrate exercises to members and advise on how the Queenax can be used in day to day workouts. Personal Trainers use the Queenax with most, if not all, of their clients. There are no restrictions on use and the Queenax is available at all times for members to use as they wish, on their own or in small groups. For some, it forms the main basis of their workout and for others it is used as a smaller part of their workout.

"The Queenax training was really good and taught me a whole range of activities I can use with clients"

Personal Trainer, Anytime Fitness
What do the customers think of the Queenax?

The Queenax was one of the most frequently used pieces of equipment during our visit to the gym. Everyone who used it had a clear idea about what they were doing, with many members working together on the equipment. Customers commented that they liked the versatility, as well as the visual impact that the unit offered, acting as a central focal point to the gym. All the different apps were in use at different times, with a wide range of ages and abilities able to use the kit.

“I live on the Queenax, I train with Rob and he gets me doing some crazy workouts on it”

Member, Anytime Fitness

What Queenax apps are used?

Anytime Fitness Luton offers offers a wide range of additional apps to use with the Queenax including:

◊ TRX®
◊ Pull up bar
◊ Battle rope
◊ Punchbag
◊ Superfunctional Training bar
◊ Fixed Parallels
◊ Plyometric Platform
◊ Torso Trainer
◊ Curved bar
◊ Trampette

What do the staff think?

The personal trainers are very positive towards the Queenax, saying they use it with most, if not all, of their clients. The Punchbag apps are particularly popular. The staff state the training they received on the Queenax was very extensive and has enabled them to develop a full range of activities to showcase and use with their clients.

“I'd never used or seen a Queenax before but I think every gym should have one”

Member, Anytime Fitness

What do customers think?

A real mix of members use the Queenax and there is no ‘typical’ user. Many members have a favourite exercise they will add into their workout, whereas others complete their entire workout on the Queenax. Even members unfamiliar with the unit are quickly able to pick up new exercises and experiment with the different apps.
Why Queenax™ is the right choice for you

Fits any space in any location
These four case studies show the Queenax is a great addition to any type of fitness facility. The environments we looked at were very varied, from city centre chain gyms to local specialised training labs and busy leisure centres, that have all successfully solved their customers needs by installing Queenax units. The Queenax is a bespoke unit that can be designed and tailored to fit into many different sized and shaped spaces.

Classes or solo exercise
The Queenax’s versatility is demonstrated through the vast range of classes using the unit that are on offer at different facilities. These include core training, HIIT, strength training, yoga and boxing. Whilst not in use for a class, the Queenax offers a wealth of training opportunities for individuals wishing to follow their own fitness regime.

One unit, many apps
Our four case studies demonstrate a large selection of the Queenax apps, with many more available. These apps transform how the Queenax can be used and increase the types of exercises that can be performed. The range is extensive, from storage additions to TRX bars, punchbags and trampolines. The modular structure of the Queenax means there is a wide variety of possibilities.

Space efficient
The Queenax is a bespoke unit that can be designed and tailored to fit into different sized and shaped spaces. The four units in the case studies all use the space available in different ways. For some, the walls and ceilings house the unit, with the space in-between kept completely free for studio classes. For others, the whole unit is a statement centrepiece.

Fun and effective functional workouts
With the Queenax you can work as hard or as easy as you like. It can be used for intensive training or gentle stretching. The Queenax also brings an element of fun to workouts, with some users commenting it was like playing on a climbing frame.
Contact Precor to find out more:

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