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Submission title

The Clock: A revolution in gym and exercise design

Client company

The Clock

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The
Clock



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UK health and fitness industry is booming but has never been more at odds with what consumers are really looking for. Consumers are more empowered and in control of their health than ever before – 1 in 7 people in the UK are now paying members of a gym – yet the vast majority of fitness outlets fail to provide the kind of personalisation that is defining the narrative of our modern lifestyles. The equipment that populates these establishments has been the same for decades, failing to progress with the advancement of the science of exercise.

Renowned nutritionist, personal trainer and author of 'The High Fat Diet' (Vermilion, 2015), Zana Morris, wanted to combat these and other shortcomings that she

had noted throughout her 20-year career in the fitness industry. With her first training centre in central London's Harley Street reaching a plateau, Zana felt that her vision to grow the gym into a holistic health space would be best achieved in a new location, and under a new brand. She approached the agency to relaunch the gym, rooting the brief in a desire to unite the science behind her training philosophy with a bespoke, premium and human approach to nurturing mental and emotional wellbeing.

The Clock elevates exercise from the sapless world of sweatbox gyms to one of inspiration, aspiration and all-encompassing health. An exclusive members club dedicated to the scientific alignment of exercise, relaxation and nutrition, The Clock brings Zana's 15-minute workout philosophy to life with a training regime designed around a single, revolutionary piece of exercise equipment, The Time Piece.

- ⌚ Year 1 turnover supersedes objectives by 51%
 - ⌚ Year 2 core sales growth of 38%
 - ⌚ Year 2 profit growth of 66%
 - ⌚ Membership increase of 34%, outperforming the market by 14%
 - ⌚ Y2 membership reaches maximum capacity
 - ⌚ Second location opening in Mayfair early in 2019, two years ahead of schedule
 - ⌚ Four new machines produced and demand growing
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The Clock phenomenally surpassed original targets in its first year and, now, in year two is still driving growth and demand with a new venue due to open in early 2019, memberships and classes are at capacity and new Time Piece machines are currently in development. All of these impressive results have been solely achieved through the remarkable strength of the interior, identity, industrial and experience design.



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

With over 20 years' experience in yoga, personal training and dietetics, nutritionist and exercise expert Zana Morris knows a thing or two about fitness. Having continually recognised flaws in the conventional, cookie-cutter gym industry, Zana is a firm believer in the importance of a personalised approach to fitness. At her boutique London gyms in Harley Street, Barnes and Notting Hill, she has developed and popularised a unique workout regime that combines

strength training and HIT (not to be confused with the better known HIIT, of which Zana questions the efficacy as intervals scientifically allow muscle fibres to recover, meaning that individuals use only a portion of the muscle group).

With her Harley Street gym reaching a natural point of saturation – the client base was committed and inspired by the results that Zana's training philosophy delivered, but not growing – Zana saw an opportunity

to extend her philosophy of 'intelligent exercise' into a disruptive and commercially viable offering. In conceptualising and delivering both the brand and physical space for her fourth gym venture, Zana set Pearlfisher the following two objectives:

- ⌚ To create a bespoke concept for a gym that would encompass all the elements of a holistic approach to health: exercise, nutrition, relaxation, community and the symbiosis of body and mind, ultimately reinventing perceptions of what a 'gym' can deliver.
- ⌚ To design a piece of proprietary exercise equipment that would represent and facilitate Zana's training philosophy, building on her industry experience to address the failings of existing circuit technology.



DESCRIPTION



By facilitating a new approach to exercise – intense but considered; results-orientated but enjoyable – The Clock is a luxury concept with different bespoke training programs tailored to meet the client's unique fitness goals and needs. And provides a contemporary contrast to the frantic, time-pressed and uninspiring world of 'sweatbox' gyms. An individual, results-driven model, The Clock is a true industry first that is changing the way people perceive and experience fitness.

Pearlfisher's creation of The Clock is a feat of brand strategy, identity, industrial, interior, experience and communication design and is rooted in the brand idea of 'turning back the clock' and giving people back one of today's most precious resources: time. The names 'The Clock' (the name of the gym) and 'The Time Piece' (the name of the exercise machine) imply a sense of urgency over the ageing process which, though constant and inevitable like the passage of time, can be slowed through intelligent exercise, nutrition and self-care.

The brand mark, intricate and elegant like the human body and inspired by the working cogs of a clock, is evocative of the hands of time as well as playing on the idea of 'the mouse that ran up the clock'. In the shape of a door handle, the mark reflects the gentle exclusivity of a member's club, as well as an ability to unlock time and slow ageing through the benefit of fast, intense exercise. Its bronze, antique aesthetic once again takes us back in time.

The space itself – a historical Georgian townhouse with neo-classical ceilings and furniture salvaged from war-torn Paris – evokes a distinct sense of nostalgia, while The Time Piece, with its circular brass structure and ‘cog-and-wheel’ connections, feels like it belongs in a 19th Century inventor’s workshop.

The Clock’s core training regime proves how little time is in fact needed to achieve lasting results. Members need only have three supervised training sessions per week on The Time Piece, lasting 15 minutes each, to see results. This uproots the belief that the key to fitness is in the quantity as opposed to quality of workouts, and eliminates one of the most common barriers to exercise: a lack of time.

The Time Piece sets a revolutionary new standard in the world of exercise design. Fashioned entirely from steel, chrome and aluminum, each machine is comprised of 4 different weight-bearing stations that facilitate over 150 HIT and strength training exercises. By allowing an individual to alternatively activate, stretch and contract core muscle groups, the machine forces a continuous flow of movement that recruits and elongates muscle fibres. By decreasing waiting time and eliminating rest periods, the machine facilitates a workout with greatly increased intensity. Unlike with free weights, The Time Piece holds a client firmly in position at each station, allowing for heavier weights to be lifted whilst reducing any risk of injury.

The Time Piece’s uniquely transparent nature allows a



professional trainer to observe up to six clients at any one time – impossible in any standard gym – maximising the opportunity for personal instruction, guidance and safety, even in groups. The brevity of the workouts allow individuals to spend less time exercising whilst achieving more focused results, and increases the number of clients a trainer can train within a day. In addition, The Time Piece is perfect for installation into small spaces – such as in offices or hotels – making a comprehensive fitness routine accessible to many more people.

Finally, an integral part of the fitness aspect of The Clock, the private members club also offers the options of, among other activities, taking boxing classes in a wood-paneled library or performing barre or yoga to the accompaniment of a cello or baby grand piano in the Music Room. Clients can refuel with a meal prepared by an on-site Michelin-starred chef who caters for each individual’s nutrition plan in a farm-style kitchen, or work, unwind or host business meetings in the peaceful Drawing Room.

OVERVIEW OF MARKET

Worth over £4.9 billion in 2018, the UK health & fitness industry is continuing to strengthen and grow incrementally with positive momentum year-on-year. With penetration rates at an all-time high, 1 in every 7 people in the UK is now a member of a gym and for the first time ever in the UK there are over 7,000 gyms. (Source: State of the UK Fitness Industry Report from LeisureDB, published May 2018)

Central to this has been the rise of the low-cost sector, led by Pure Gym, The Gym Group and Fitness First. Credited with the 'democratisation' of fitness, these gyms offer lower prices, 24-hour access and short-term contracts, but function on the financial model of non-attendance and generally leave members to their own devices. While these gyms serve as an adequate entry point for newcomers, their formats have not evolved to reflect new scientific research around different types of exercise and training, particularly HIT and weight training which, when unsupervised, can lead to dramatically inferior results at best and injury at worst.

On average, over half the time spent on all traditional multi-format gym floors is lost on moving from one piece of equipment to the next, setting up the equipment and waiting for stations, meaning that the average individual takes 40 minutes to complete 15-20 minutes worth of exercise. Waiting time and intermittent rest periods reduce the cardio intensity of a workout, halting crucial muscle activation and ultimately slowing the fat-burning and strength-building effect of the training session.





The traditional gym format also fails to provide the kind of individual approach that is defining the narrative of our modern lifestyles. People are more conscious of what constitutes ‘healthy’ than they’ve ever been before. Words like ‘vegan’, ‘gluten-free’ and ‘flexitarian’ form a part of our everyday lexicon and blood types and DNA profiles are driving a highly personalised approach to nutrition.

Fitness-focused wearables and apps that track everything from step count to sleep patterns are fueling the rise of the ‘Quantified Self’ – Flurry Analytics State of Mobile (2017) notes that health & fitness app usage grew by 330% in just 3 years with three quarters of active users opening their app at least two times a week and more than 25% of users accessing their fitness apps more than 10 times a week – putting us in complete control of what we put into, and get out of, our bodies.

The industry is also moving into a strongly experiential space. The likes of SoulCycle, Barry’s Bootcamp and Equinox are becoming cult-like brands, elevating the workout from a chore to a truly inspiring experience, fueled by community and bridging the gaps between exercise, entertainment, relaxation and social engagement.

🕒 **PROJECT LAUNCH DATE**

April 2016: Opening of The Clock

🕒 **DESIGN FEES**

Redacted confidential data

RESULTS

Just two years post-launch, The Clock's results have exceeded all expectations, surpassing original targets in Year 1 and still driving growth, expansion and demand into Year 2 with a new venue due to open early 2019, memberships and classes at capacity and new machines being developed. All of these impressive results have been solely achieved through the remarkable strength of the interior, identity, industrial and experience design and are even more impressive given the competitive strength of this highly influential and innovative market.



- ⌚ **Year 1 turnover beat objectives by 51%** (redacted confidential data)
- ⌚ **Year 2 core sales growth of 38%** (redacted confidential data)
- ⌚ **Y2 non-core sales are in growth by 3% on a rolling month MAT** – non-core sales – which equate to 3% of the total turnover – are ticketed events and food and drink (breakfast, lunch, coffee, cocktails) prepared on site by a Michelin-starred chef. In Y1, The Clock initially beat non-core sales projections by 25% and Y2 is outperforming the Eating Out Market by 1.5% (MCA, 2018).
- ⌚ **Year 1 budget forecast loss but delivered profit (redacted confidential data)** – and this is despite increased competition from more gyms and membership clubs opening nationally.
- ⌚ **Y2 profit grew by 66% from Y1** – which is driven by the sales growth.
- ⌚ **The Clock grew its operating profit by a further 9% in comparison to Y1 allowing it to run at 20% Net Profit Margin.**
- ⌚ **Y2 members grew by 34% from Year 1** - current private health and fitness club membership is growing at a rate of 20% (Mintel, 2018) which shows that The Clock is outperforming the market by an impressive 14%.
- ⌚ **Y2 membership hits maximum capacity** – two years ahead of schedule, membership is currently at maximum capacity of (redacted confidential data), and also boasts an impressive wait list.
- ⌚ **Second location opening early in 2019** – due to unprecedented demand, Zana has confirmed a new location for a second gym opening in Mayfair early in 2019.
- ⌚ **(Redacted confidential data) new machines produced and demand growing** – Due to high demand, Zana has commissioned the development of more machines for The Clock gym and the new gym opening in Mayfair in early 2019. Zana has also recently been approached by two other gyms who want to commission to license The Clock brand and The Timepiece equipment for their own gyms.
- ⌚ **200% increase in engagement time over original target** – (redacted confidential data)
- ⌚ **Increasing local employment** – (redacted confidential data)
- ⌚ **Winner of Industry Awards** – The Clock has been named one of ‘The Best 8 Gyms in London’ by Tatler, as well as the ‘Best Gym in London’ by London Lifestyle Awards. Juries for both commended the gym’s unique and inviting interior design and the innovative design of The Timepiece.

OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

Created without any venture capital or brand backing, The Clock has relied, since day one, on the strength of its concept and experience, and the power of its brand, to grow. Aside from a launch party and an interiors photoshoot, Zana has engaged in no advertising – online, offline or on social media – meaning that The Clock’s membership growth can be attributed to word of mouth and the press coverage it has received. It is true that this coverage has included high-level publications such as Tatler, The Independent, The Evening Standard and The Luxury Columnist but all the features have praised the innovation of The Time Piece and The Clock’s luxurious environments and bespoke approach; both of which were anchoring factors in the agency’s strategy for the brand and demonstrate the design ingenuity in bringing them to life.

From the elegance of the interior design to the dedication of the personal trainers; the inherent sense of community to the effortlessness with which every aspect of a ‘healthy’ lifestyle is catered for; The Clock is nothing short of a true revolution in a category that so desperately needs it.

“I’d say that 90% of our new members are friends, family or colleagues of existing members. It’s been really amazing to witness such powerful network effects first hand,” says Zana. “It’s also been great to avoid introducing price promotions to entice new members, which has no doubt buoyed our financial position.” The PR that The Clock has received has been impressive given that none of it has been solicited or paid for by Zana.

RESEARCH & DATA SOURCES

- ⌚ The Clock business plan, financial projections and Y1 and Y2 financial statements
- ⌚ ‘Leisure Database Company: State of the UK Fitness Industry Report’, May 2018
- ⌚ Research & Development Tax Relief Claim, compiled by Zana Morris as an application for an R&D grant provided
- ⌚ Flurry Analytics State of Mobile Report 2017
- ⌚ ‘Health and fitness club-going brits forecast to grow 20%’, Mintel press release 2018
Eating Out Market Report 2018, MCA Insight