



*FitConnect*

## IT 427: IT Entrepreneurship & Innovation

### Phase 1: Idea and Market Research

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## Table of Contents

<i>Table of Figures .....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>The Problem .....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Other Solutions : .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>The Proposed solution .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>The competitive Advantage .....</i>	<i>7</i>
Competitive Analysis .....	7
Competitive Advantage (Differentiation) .....	8
<i>Market Sizing .....</i>	<i>9</i>
Total Available Market (TAM): .....	9
Serviceable Available Market (SAM): .....	10
Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM): .....	10
<i>Market Research and Customer Validation .....</i>	<i>11</i>
Target Customers .....	11
Customer Validation .....	11
Questionnaire: .....	11
Interviews: .....	13
<i>Expansion Plan .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>References .....</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>Appendix .....</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
Questionnaire questions: .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Interviews questions: .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<i>References .....</i>	<i>15</i>

## Table of Figures

<i>Figure1 .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Figure 2 .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Figure 3 .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Figure 4 .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Figure 5 .....</i>	<i>5</i>

## Introduction

Have you ever found yourself navigating through a bustling gym, surrounded by countless machines and equipment, unsure of where to start or what exercises to do?

That feeling of uncertainty and overwhelm can hinder your fitness journey before it even begins.

FitConnect understands the challenges many face when trying to navigate the world of fitness. That's why FitConnect aims to revolutionize people's fitness journey and make achieving their health goals easier than ever before.

FitConnect is not just another fitness app; it's your personalized fitness companion, dedicated to guiding you towards success. With our innovative features and expert guidance, we empower you to take control of your health and well-being. Say goodbye to confusion and frustration, and hello to a seamless, enjoyable fitness experience.

## The Problem

Fitness enthusiasts who prefer exercising at home and those seeking personalized training services face several challenges. Many individuals opt for home workouts due to convenience and comfort, but they often struggle to find comprehensive and professional training programs tailored to their specific needs. The availability of high-quality home workout options is limited, making it difficult to find diverse and engaging routines. Furthermore, locating qualified personal trainers who can provide remote training sessions or in-home visits can be time-consuming and unreliable. This poses a challenge in connecting with the right trainer who can effectively guide them towards their fitness goals. Additionally, the absence of an efficient progress tracking and monitoring system makes it challenging to stay motivated and accurately track overall progress.

## Other Solutions

There is a handful of other solutions and applications competing in the virtual fitness market, in this section we will list and discuss a few of them:



Figure 1

### - Future App:

Future is a personal training app [1] that connects users with elite personal trainers to create tailored workout programs. The app's features include personalized access to trainers via messaging, bespoke weekly training plans that accommodate rest days and favorite activities, and comprehensive movement guides complete with form checks. It's designed for adaptability, allowing adjustments to workouts based on individual schedules and the equipment available to the user. Furthermore, Future integrates seamlessly with Apple Watch and HealthKit, enabling detailed activity monitoring.



Figure 2

### - CoPilot App:

CoPilot is a personalized coaching service [2] designed to foster health habits across multiple wellness domains, including physical activity, nutrition, mindfulness, and recovery. It employs a gamification strategy, rewarding points to promote consistency among users. The service offers training support for users through daily check-in messages, video calls, and a variety of instructional materials. CoPilot customizes the user experience by integrating with Apple Health.



Figure 3

### - FlexIt App:

FlexIt offers both virtual personal training and physical gym access [3]. The service allows users to engage in live training sessions with expert trainers from renowned brands. For those preferring gym workouts, FlexIt provides a seamless, paperless entry to a wide network of partner gyms through a simple QR code scan. Each training session, whether virtual or in-person, is personalized, focusing on one-on-one interactions to tailor the experience to individual needs and goals, accessible via the FlexIt app or website.



Figure 4

### - Kickoff App:

Kickoff offers a personalized fitness coaching service [4] that prioritizes the ease of remote training while addressing both fitness and nutrition comprehensively. The service tailors a unique exercise program for each user, supported by live video sessions, daily text check-ins,

and ongoing support to ensure consistent progress. Additionally, Kickoff provides customized daily meal plans, catering to individual dietary needs and goals. It also integrates with Apple Health, allowing for the seamless importation of workout data to further personalize and enhance the training experience.



Figure 5

#### - Obé Fitness App:

obé Fitness offers a comprehensive and engaging fitness solution tailored specifically for women [5], emphasizing a personalized and holistic approach to wellness. The platform stands out by addressing women's unique health needs through features like cycle syncing for workouts, mood-based class recommendations, and express options for those hectic days. It crafts customized workout plans that align with each user's fitness objectives, lifestyle habits, and preferences. Additionally, obé encourages skill development and variety in fitness routines by introducing programs and challenges in areas such as running, yoga, Pilates, and weight loss. For those seeking more direct guidance, obé also provides the option of personal training through massages, offering a well-rounded approach to health and wellness specifically designed for women.

## Proposed Solution

Introducing FitConnect, our all-encompassing personal trainer app designed to revolutionize your fitness journey. In addition to offering seamless remote and in-home training sessions, FitConnect goes above and beyond to address the challenges of personalized fitness experiences. Trainers on our platform can effortlessly update trainee progress through the built-in tracking service, providing a comprehensive overview of performance and overall development. This feature allows for personalized feedback and adjustments to training programs, motivating trainees as they witness their progress.

FitConnect ensures the highest quality of trainers by implementing a thorough verification process. Trainers register with their academic qualifications and accreditations, guaranteeing expertise. Communication is streamlined through trainer profiles, which showcase demonstration videos, reviews from previous trainees, and detailed qualifications. The app operates on a subscription-based model, providing trainees with monthly access to the platform's extensive features and services. Trainers, after a one-time initiation fee for verification, enjoy free subscription.

We plan to seamlessly integrate with health apps, enhancing the overall fitness tracking experience. Group session workout classes offer a sense of companionship even when they are at home, allowing users to practice together in a virtual environment. Moreover, we're expanding our network to include health nutritionists who can provide personalized nutrition advice for a nominal visitation fee.

FitConnect is not just about workouts; it's a holistic approach to a healthy lifestyle. We are collaborating with a healthy food delivery company to integrate nutrition advice seamlessly into users' routines. With this feature, users can receive recommended meals based on their fitness goals and trainer/nutritionist advice without requiring a separate membership with the food delivery company.

Lastly, FitConnect is partnering with renowned gym clothing companies like "Gymshark" to offer exciting incentives. Users completing a trainer's program stand a chance to win exclusive rewards such as a shirt from Gymshark, fostering motivation and engagement within our thriving fitness community. FitConnect is not just an app; it's a gateway to personalized training programs, progress tracking, and a secure, convenient environment for trainers and trainees alike.

## Competitive Advantage

In this section, we will analyze the difference between our proposed solution and other applications and programs currently out in the market, highlighting key features and differences between the different solutions emphasizing our advantage points.

### Competitive Analysis

According to the extensive market search we did, we are pinpointing the key features provided by most application, those included:

- Customized workout plan.
- Trainer support via messaging and video calls.
- Full on Personal trainer live one-on-one training sessions.
- Group live work out sessions.
- Nutritional meal plans.
- Integration with Apple health app.
- Gamification and awards.
- Communicaiton with health specialists.
- Special benefits, such as partnerships with gyms, fitness brands, and food companies.

Here, we highlight the existence of these features on the researched applications:

Table 1: Compare and Contrast Table

	FitConnect	Future	CoPilot	FlixIt	Kickoff	Obe Fitness
Customized workout plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trainer support via messaging and video calls	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
live one-on-one training sessions	✓			✓	✓	
Group live work out sessions	✓					
Nutrition meal plans	✓		✓		✓	
Integration with health apps	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gamification and awards	✓		✓			
Communicaiton with health specialists	✓					
Special benefits	✓			✓		

## Competitive Advantage (Differentiation)

The FitConnect app distinguishes itself in the competitive fitness market with several standout features. It offers not just individual, but also group live workout sessions, enriching the exercise experience and fostering a sense of community. The app further enhances user engagement by tracking progress and rewarding users upon the completion of workout plans.

Moreover, FitConnect extends its wellness support beyond physical exercise by facilitating communication with health experts such as nutritionists. This allows users to receive tailored advice on dietary and health needs. Elevating the service, FitConnect partners with a healthy food company to not just provide nutritional meal plans but also to deliver these meticulously curated meals directly to the user.

These integrated services place the FitConnect app as a strong competition in the fitness application landscape, offering a holistic and user-centric approach to health and wellness.



## Market Sizing

Market sizing is a crucial analysis for identifying the potential customer base interested in a product or service within a specific market. It's essential for making informed business decisions, forecasting profits, and demonstrating a product's investment appeal [6].

In this section we are going to discuss our market sizing in the global and regional fitness market, highlighting the online and virtual fitness market as our primary interest.

### Total Available Market (TAM)

In terms of the Total Available Market (TAM) for the fitness industry, current reports and statistics estimate the TAM to be \$98.14 billion in 2023, with expectations to expand to \$172.95 billion by 2028 [7]. This anticipated growth, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 12.00% during the forecast period, is attributed to increasing health and fitness awareness and a growing inclination towards personalized training and customized fitness experiences.

The digital and online fitness sectors have seen a peak in interest as well, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic's impact, with revenue in the Digital Fitness & Well-Being market projected to hit \$93.56 billion in 2024. This sector is expected to continue growing at a CAGR of 7.83%, reaching a market volume of \$126.50 billion by 2028 [8].

## Serviceable Available Market (SAM)

Within our regional scope of Saudi Arabia, the Serviceable Available Market (SAM) for the Health and Fitness Club Market is forecasted at \$968.69 million for 2023 [9], accounting for 0.987% of the worldwide market. This percentage is derived from the formula:

$$\text{Percentage Share} = (\$0.96869 \text{ billion} / \$98.14 \text{ billion}) * 100\% = 0.987\%$$

The market is experiencing significant growth, spurred by the Vision 2030 initiative aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle among Saudi citizens. Projections indicate a rise to \$2,649.14 million by 2032, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 5.89% from 2024 to 2032 [9].

Nevertheless, the Saudi fitness sector faces hurdles, notably high operational costs, which hamper the development and continuity of smaller, independent gyms [9]. This challenge has propelled a pivot towards online fitness solutions. The digital fitness segment in Saudi Arabia is anticipated to ascend to US\$392.40 million in 2024 and further expand at a CAGR of 6.52%, reaching US\$505.20 million by 2028 [10]. This represents 0.42% of the global online fitness market, as calculated by:

$$\text{Percentage Share} = (\$392.40 \text{ million} / \$93.56 \text{ billion}) * 100\% = 0.42\%$$

However, this segment captures a significant share of approximately 40.51% of Saudi Arabia's total fitness market, calculated using:

$$\text{Percentage Share} = (\$392.40 \text{ million} / \$968.69 \text{ million}) * 100\% = 40.51\%$$

This significant share of the online market is largely due to cultural preferences, with a considerable segment of the population, especially women, preferring to exercise at home rather than attending outdoor gyms [11].

## Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM)

Serviceable Obtainable Market is where you get to know, identify and determine how many customers can benefit from your product or service.

For calculating the SOM, we divide the SAM over our competitors:

$$968.690.000/6 = \$161,448,333 \text{ million}$$

# Market Research and Customer Validation

## Target Customers

FitConnect targets a diverse group of individuals prioritizing convenience, personalization, and comprehensive wellness solutions in their fitness journey, catering to both men and women across a broad age spectrum from 16 to 60 years old. Primary customers include home workout enthusiasts seeking flexible and effective fitness routines, fitness beginners in need of personalized guidance and health-focused individuals looking for a holistic approach integrating exercise and nutrition. Additionally, busy professionals, remote workers, and those seeking affordable personal training alternatives find value in FitConnect's offerings. By catering to a wide range of needs from convenience and personalization to comprehensive health and wellness, FitConnect aims to be the go-to platform for anyone looking to enhance their fitness experience in a tailored, accessible, and engaging way.

## Customer Validation

Recognizing how crucial it is to meet users' needs for an app to succeed, we gathered information through 50 interviews and questionnaires of a total of 146 people. This helps us understand our target audience better and lays the groundwork for FitConnect, ensuring that it meets users' expectations and keeps them engaged.

### Questionnaire Summary

The survey with 146 respondents reveals that a majority of 84.2% of individuals interested in fitness fall within the age range of 16-30 years, showing a significant presence of young adults. Additionally, the survey shows a gender distribution, with 62.3% of respondents being male and 37.7% being female, indicating a male-dominated interest in fitness services. In terms of exercise frequency, 34.2% of participants engage in physical activity 3-5 times a week, while 30.8% exercise 1-2 times a week, and 28.8% do not exercise at all. A small fraction of 6.2% exercise daily, highlighting diverse activity levels among respondents. Moreover, the survey indicates a preference for workout environments, with 63.7% favoring gym workouts, while 36.3% opt for home-based fitness solutions.

Regarding personalized training programs, 42.5% of respondents express disinterest, while 26% prefer a combination of remote and in-home sessions, 20.5% favor remote training, and 11% opt for in-home sessions. These preferences reflect the varied demand for fitness programs tailored to individual needs.

Challenges faced during home workouts include the lack of specialized exercise equipment (60.3%), the absence of a clear exercise schedule (39.7%), and fear of injury from incorrect form (39%). Additionally, 37% miss the motivation provided by the gym environment, and 29.5% lack professional guidance, highlighting potential areas for improvement in home-based fitness. When it comes to barriers to gym attendance, the most significant deterrent is expensive gym subscriptions, reported by

65.1% of respondents, followed by a lack of time (54.1%), and long distances between home and the gym (32.2%). These insights emphasize the importance of affordability and convenience in fitness offerings.

Furthermore, 54.1% of respondents have a clear vision of their fitness goals, while 45.9% do not. The main obstacles to achieving desired fitness levels include a lack of commitment to a balanced diet (67.1%) and regular exercise (54.8%), as well as issues related to time (42.5%) and financial constraints for personal trainers (14.4%). In terms of health monitoring, 71.9% of respondents do not use health apps, suggesting a potential gap in the adoption of health technology. For the 28.1% who do use such apps, Fitness/Apple Watches are the most popular choice at 9.4%, indicating an opportunity for fitness services to target this user base. Interestingly, 62.3% of respondents believe they can achieve the same fitness results working out at home as they can in the gym, signaling a positive perception of home-based fitness solutions. This aligns with the growing trend of home-based fitness programs.

Lastly, the survey results show diverse interest in seeking nutritional advice through a fitness app. Approximately 36.3% are somewhat likely to consider it, 30.8% express strong inclination, 17.1% are not inclined, and 15.8% remain undecided. This indicates varying degrees of interest in nutrition guidance through fitness apps. Moreover, a significant 41.1% of respondents are definitely interested in using an application for scheduling workouts with a certified trainer and receiving meal plans and evaluations, while 27.4% might consider it, showing potential market interest. Additionally, 17.1% affirmatively responded that they would use such an application, suggesting a solid base of potential users. However, 8.9% are not interested, and a small segment of 5.5% does not think they would use such services, indicating there are some reservations about app-based personal training solutions.

In conclusion, the survey data provides valuable insights into the preferences and challenges of individuals interested in fitness, offering opportunities for fitness services like FitConnect to tailor their offerings and marketing strategies to meet the needs of different segments of the market.

## Interviews Summary

In this section, we summarize the findings from a series of interviews conducted with a diverse group of fitness app users, encompassing a broad range of experiences and preferences. A total of 50 interviews were carried out to glean insights into the users' needs, challenges, and expectations from digital fitness solutions. By engaging directly with users, we sought to understand the nuances of their fitness journeys and gather valuable feedback on how a fitness app can best serve their goals, accommodate their preferences, and address their concerns.

Our comprehensive analysis of 50 interviews with fitness app users reveals a multifaceted perspective on the current state and future aspirations for fitness app functionalities and services. Initially, we explored users' experiences with existing fitness applications, where a common thread was the desire for more personalized and customizable workout plans. Users expressed a need for fitness solutions that are adaptable to individual goals, physical conditions, and progress, highlighting the importance of incorporating adaptive algorithms and user interfaces to cater to diverse fitness objectives. The qualifications and certifications of trainers emerged as a significant concern, underscoring the necessity for fitness apps to employ rigorous vetting processes. Ensuring trainers' credentials are visible and verifiable builds trust and credibility within the app's ecosystem. Alongside professional expertise, the safeguarding of personal data through secure communication channels was deemed paramount, indicating a preference for privacy and data security in user-trainer interactions.

Payment flexibility was another area of interest, with opinions divided between the preference for standardized pricing and flexible payment models. This discrepancy suggests that offering a variety of pricing options could accommodate a broader user base. Additionally, the integration of comprehensive health and nutrition services, along with meal delivery services tailored to fitness goals, was enthusiastically received. Such features are prized for their potential to deliver a holistic wellness journey, seamlessly blending exercise with optimal nutrition. This holistic approach is further enriched by users' appreciation for community features. Although preferences vary between communal and individual workout experiences, indicating that apps should cater to both preferences to maximize user engagement. Lastly, the importance of a user-friendly interface, seamless integration with other health apps, and accessibility across devices were identified as crucial for enhancing the user experience.

In synthesizing these insights, it becomes evident that users are seeking a more holistic, customizable, and secure fitness app experience. They value professional guidance, privacy, flexibility in pricing, and a comprehensive approach that encompasses both physical and nutritional aspects of wellness. Addressing these preferences can significantly enhance user satisfaction and engagement, paving the way for the development of a fitness app that not only meets but exceeds user expectations.

## Expansion Plan

When FitConnect launches onto the market, our strategy begins with a cautious but proactive approach. Initially, we aim to test the waters by quietly introducing the app to a limited user base without an elaborate marketing campaign. This allows us to detect and rectify any potential glitches or issues swiftly, minimizing any adverse effects on user experience.

Following this trial phase, our focus shifts towards building a robust online presence. We'll establish accounts across various social media platforms, including TikTok, Twitter, and Instagram, to engage with a broader audience and create buzz around FitConnect. Through compelling content and targeted outreach, we aim to attract more users to our platform while actively expanding our social networking skills to connect with potential investors and industry partners.

As we gather momentum and accumulate a loyal user base, we'll leverage strategic partnerships to enhance the FitConnect experience. Integrating with renowned brands like Gymshark, users completing their training program can win exciting incentives such as a clothing item or discount code, fostering motivation and engagement. Similarly, collaborating with healthy food delivery services such as Fresh House allows users to receive personalized meals seamlessly through their FitConnect membership, eliminating the need for a separate subscription with fresh house. Moreover, by contracting certified health nutritionists, users can access personalized advice without additional fees, enriching their journey towards a healthier lifestyle and reinforcing FitConnect's commitment to holistic wellness without needing a separate subscription or fee for a consultation with the health nutritionist.

As FitConnect continues to grow, we'll actively seek investment opportunities, and our team members will expand our networking skills to keep seeking more investors and expanding. Eventually we plan to establish ourselves as a pivotal middleman between various health and wellness platforms, all while maintaining a vibrant presence on social media to engage with our community and foster continuous growth.

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