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PRESEMITTEILUNG

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Innovation at FitnessConnected: The Opportunities Physical eSports Bring to the World of Fitness

Gaming has become an integral part of society: 58 percent of Germans play computer and video games, according to the latest figures from the GfK Consumer Panel, thus generating annual sales of EUR 8.5 billion in the industry. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to people in this country exercising less than previously and also gaining weight. "I therefore see great potential in harnessing people's gambling instincts to get them to move more. Gamification, experience and convention are also becoming increasingly important in the fitness sector. That's why I'm very pleased that we have a dedicated Future Area on the subject at FitnessConnected from 18 to 20 November," says Ralph Scholz, CEO of FitnessConnected. In the 160-square-meter designated area, physical eSports can be experienced and tried out live - from HADO, an electronic version of dodgeball, to SENSE DOJO, a virtual personal coach, to Beat Saber, a rhythm game in virtual reality format.

Gamification boosts motivation

Experience points, rankings, virtual goods, high scores: all these elements of gamification lead to motivation and an accompanying sense of achievement - just like in a good fitness workout. "The gamified concept allows people to forget about the time invested in fitness and stay the course," says Marcus Meyer, managing director of Force of Disruption GmbH, an agency specializing in eSports and live communication, that will be exhibiting its products and services at

FitnessConnected. The possibilities for bringing competitive elements of gaming into the fitness world are varied: gamers, for example, can use special input devices to move as avatars in virtual worlds; there are now also some initial approaches in virtual reality or augmented reality games, in which body movements via stationary sensor technology serve as input for the digital playground. "Experts from the gaming industry see the potential and are looking for partners to make gamified sports worlds truly accessible to everyone," explains Marcus Meyer.

Physical eSports create a digital connection with customers

Three examples at FitnessConnected will demonstrate how this can be applied in practical terms. SENSE DOJO combines the latest tracking hardware with a virtual personal coach. The latter puts together an individual and customized coaching program based on AI. HADO, on the other hand, is the electronic version of dodgeball, which most people still remember from PE at school: The opposing team is not thrown real plastic balls, but "electronic balls" generated by an iPod on the wrist and projected via a headset. The goal of the virtual reality game Beat Saber is for participants to slash visualized music beats coming at them with swords. So, there are already plenty of ideas for how gaming and movement can be combined. Which technology will be successful in the future depends a lot on how players in the fitness and gaming worlds can network with each other and form communities. "With the help of digital input, the fitness industry has an opportunity to stay connected with customers by creating unique new experiences and touch points in the real world. Now it's a matter of trying things out and engaging in a genuine dialogue with the 50+ percent of society that gets excited about games," said Marcus Meyer.

You can also find more information at <https://forceofdisruption.com/fitnessconnected/>.

For more detailed information, please visit www.fitness-connected.com.



Ralph Scholz, CEO FitnessConnected

Marcus Meyer, Force of Disruption GmbH

Caption HADO: HADO, a type of electronic dodgeball, will be featured at FitnessConnected.
(Credits: epikk_sport)

Caption SENSE DOJO: To be experienced at FintessConnected: SENSE DOJO combines the latest tracking hardware with a virtual personal coach. (Credits: sensedoyo.com)