

INDUSTRY LEADERS FORECAST

→ The 2023 Predictions Report

Looking ahead with some of
the biggest names in wellness





COVID-19 recovery, political instability, soaring inflation—the business landscape is changing at a rapid pace. So, what does the future hold?

We asked leaders of top wellness brands to share their predictions for 2023 and beyond. While their perspectives varied, they shared a common thread of optimism. **Even in the face of complexity, they agree that the opportunities for growth and impact are endless.**

2023 AND BEYOND

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The metaverse will expand



*Emma Barry, Chief Creative Soul,
Good Soul Hunting*

“It’s the continuum of the evolution of the internet. It’s going to be the meeting place for all realities and it’s going to create quite an intoxicating environment. **It’s going to get really good. Don’t judge it before you’ve tried it.**”

Streaming workouts were once seen as the wave of the future. Today, an immersive gamification of the fitness industry is underway. The adoption of augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) will continue to grow at a rapid pace. In fact, [researchers](#) predict growth of more than \$125 billion globally by 2024. As a result, leading fitness brands, like [TRIB3](#), will continue to jump on board.

Chief Creative Soul of [Good Soul Hunting](#) Emma Barry is excited about the future of AR/VR. “Right now, [the technology] is clunky. It’s a little bit scary. And we keep hearing how everyone’s worried

they’re going to pop in and never come out again, but television was the same when it was introduced,” Barry claims. “Is it going away? No, because it’s the continuum of the evolution of the internet. It’s going to be the meeting place for all realities and it’s going to create quite an intoxicating environment.”

But how will it impact in-person experiences? “I don’t believe it’s going to cannibalise, or if it does, it’s going to cannibalise as part of the greater ecosystem,” says Barry. “It’s going to get really good. Don’t judge it before you’ve tried it.”



*Bryan Myers, President and
CEO, [solidcore]*

“Wellness brands should start to think of how they can ‘Netflix-ise’ or ‘TikTok-ise’ their consumer journey and experience, leveraging data and AI algorithms to proactively suggest how clients should interact with their service (or product) based on a user’s stated wellness goals and their ongoing behavior. **This type of tailored and personalised experience will help clients achieve their goals more quickly and consistently** while also driving retention and revenue for the business.

In 2023, personalisation will be increasingly important. According to a recent [McKinsey article](#), over 70% of consumers expect to have personalised interactions with brands they invest in and over three-quarters get frustrated when they don’t.

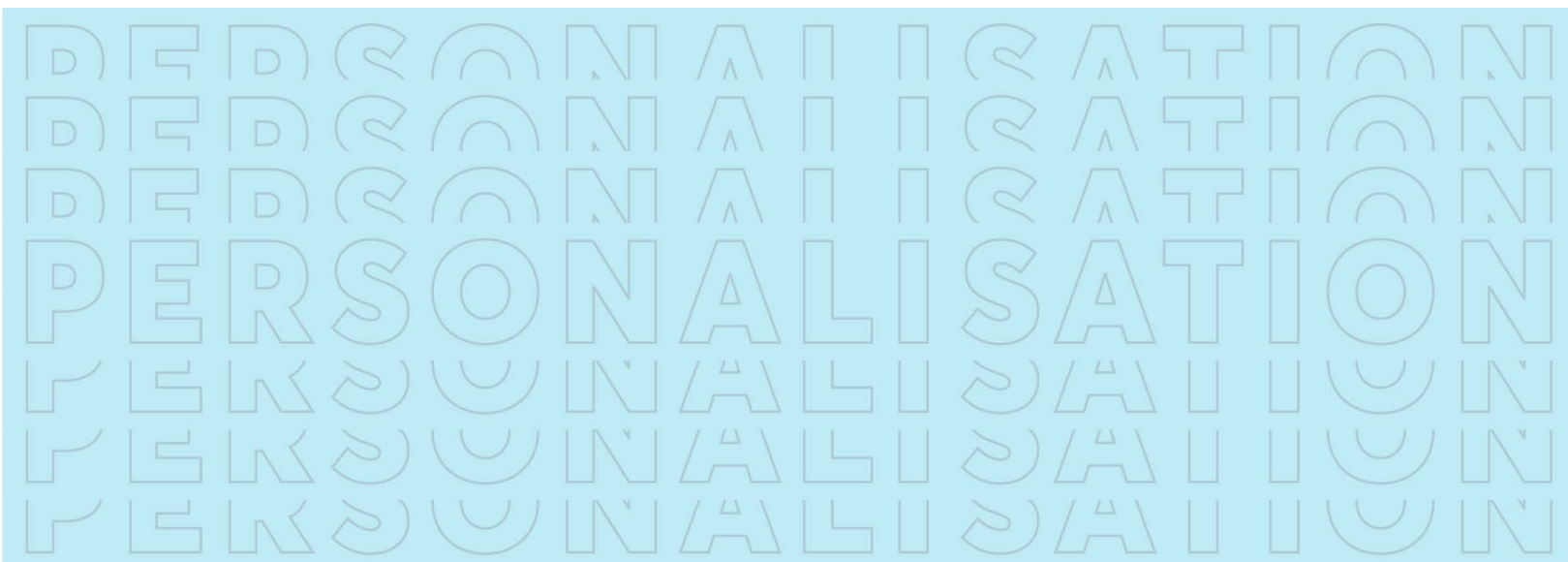
In the wellness industry, a personalised approach is perhaps even more important. A second [McKinsey article](#) shows consumers are increasingly willing to give their personal data to receive more personalised wellness treatments and services.

For wellness brands like [Hydration Room](#), a personal approach is nothing new. "Personalisation has been the driving force behind our business strategy since day one. Our health and wellness are inherently individual. What is going to work for you might not always be the case for anyone else. With personalisation and customisation, you receive a much more engaged customer: one who visits weekly, is eager to try new services, and becomes a champion of your brand online and in-person," claims Founder and CEO Dr. Brett Florie. "Of course, this all leads back to customer service—making sure you have dedicated employees who are willing to put in the time to educate your customers. That will always yield a reward."

In the years ahead, [solidcore](#) will also continue to prioritize personalisation. "Personalisation in order to help clients achieve results is more than a business strategy—it is a business imperative. Without it, clients are apt to move on until they find someone willing to help them lay out a roadmap more clearly and personally," explains President and CEO Bryan Myers.

Myers suggests leveraging artificial intelligence to help customers achieve their goals more effectively. "Wellness brands should start to think of how they can 'Netflix-ise' or 'TikTok-ise' their consumer journey and experience, leveraging data and AI algorithms to proactively suggest how clients should interact with their service (or product) based on a user's stated wellness goals and their ongoing behavior," he shares. "This type of tailored and personalised experience will help clients achieve their goals more quickly and consistently while also driving retention and revenue for the business."

With personalisation, however, comes concerns about privacy. Although consumers want personalised experiences, they may object to their data being collected. "With that, I believe it's important that users have transparent visibility into what data is being collected when, and how it's being used. They should have the opportunity to opt in or out of the experience based on their personal level of comfort," Myers suggests.





**Dr. Brett Florie, Founder and
CEO, Hydration Room**

“Our health and wellness are inherently individual. What is going to work for you might not always be the case for anyone else. **With personalisation and customisation, you receive a much more engaged customer:** one who visits weekly, is eager to try new services, and becomes a champion of your brand online and in-person.

Music strategies will become key retention strategies





Leah Seacrest, VP of Fitness and Operations, Co-Owner, Regymen Fitness

“I’ve heard it once said that music is essentially a legal performance-enhancing drug. Boutique **fitness studios that do not emphasise the importance of music within the customer experience miss out** on a crucial, foundational piece that drives their customers’ motivation—and therefore, results. In the end, results drive retention and brand loyalty.

A good playlist is essential to keep people motivated—and coming back. According to the [2022 Mindbody Wellness Index](#), 71% of consumers say music motivates them during movement and over 40% say they discover new music through their wellness routines.

In 2023, industry leaders will need to prioritise playlists and their impact on the customer experience. Stronger music strategies may include shared playlists, music-centered events, and partnerships with celebrity artists, à la [Orangetheory Fitness](#)

[and their new Chief Music Officer Steve Aoki.](#)

Fitness brands that don’t have a thoughtful approach to music may see motivation—and retention—take a hit. “Boutique fitness studios that do not emphasise the importance of music within the customer experience miss out on a crucial, foundational piece that drives their customers’ motivation and therefore results. In the end, results drive retention and brand loyalty,” according to Leah Seacrest, VP of Fitness and Operations of [Regymen Fitness](#).

Company culture will be more important than ever



“The reality is, if you don’t focus on having a positive culture, you’re not going to retain employees. **The workforce has changed and if you don’t change with it, you’re not going to have a business that can grow.**



Kristin Kidd, Vice President of Operations, The Lash Lounge



Mark Schlossberg, CEO and Co-founder, PAINT Nail Bar

“**The staff is the heartbeat of the business—and it begins with the first interview,** which is intensely psychologically oriented. We differentiate

ourselves by making clear exactly how we view their role and [reiterating] that they are foundational to the success of all that we do. Secondly, we over-train, over-support, and over-empower them without condition. Their families and children are equally important to ours. Our staff members know they are our priority, above all else. We make readily available to them opportunities for growth and I have learned, without exception, it is the counterintuitive aspects of leading staff that makes all the difference.



**Vanessa Yakobson, CEO,
Blo Blow Dry Bar**

Blo has a brand promise: We're here to make you shine. We deliver that promise to our guests as well as to our staff. We are focusing on creating opportunities for our team members to enhance their skill sets as Blo adds services to our mix. We also offer the opportunity to sell products and upgraded services to enhance their earnings. **We want our team to shine in a fun environment where they feel valued and appreciated.**

Today's employment market is unique and difficult for organisations to navigate. According to a [recent study by FRANdata and IFA](#), nearly 90% of respondents reported franchisees are having trouble finding skilled workers, unskilled workers, or both. Another staggering figure: A recent [McKinsey article](#) claims 40% of employees are likely to leave their current job in the next three to six months.

Why the significant transition? "[During the pandemic], people had a really good look in the mirror, and they reprioritised," according to Good Soul Hunting Chief Soul Officer Emma Barry. "It's not all about the dollar anymore. People want to know they matter."

So, what can brands do to attract and retain high-quality talent in 2023? [New research](#)



shows flexibility and company culture will be increasingly important.

"The reality is, if you don't focus on having a positive culture, you're not going to retain employees," says [The Lash Lounge](#) Vice President of Operations Kristin Kidd. "The workforce has changed and if you don't change with it, you're not going to have a business that can grow."

For Mark Schlossberg, CEO and Co-founder of [PAINT Nail Bar](#), his company culture is staff-centric. "The client never comes first, nor should they come first. The staff comes first," he says. "The staff is the heartbeat of the business—and it begins with the first interview, which is intensely psychologically oriented. We differentiate ourselves by making clear exactly how we view their role and [reiterating] that they are foundational to the success of all that we do."

When hiring, Regymen Fitness leans on technology to ensure the right fit. "We've invested in software that allows us to better match candidates to the positions we are

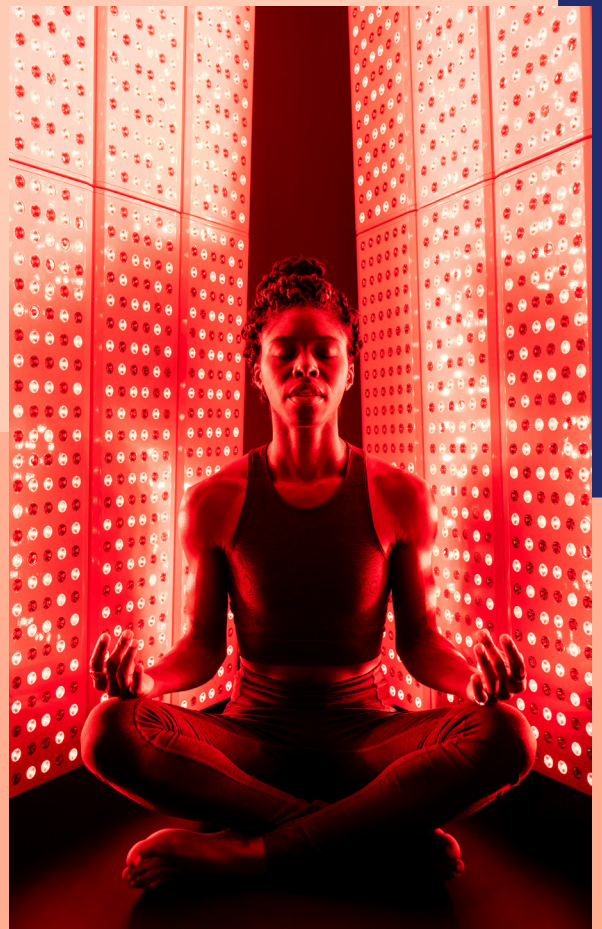
looking to fill," shares VP of Fitness and Operations and Co-Owner Leah Seacrest. "This works equally to benefit us as a company but also for the candidate to make sure they are well suited to the expectations of the job."

Seacrest also says, "This same software has allowed us to also better understand our existing team and leverage training opportunities geared to build a stronger culture thus having a positive effect on our employee retention."

To retain top talent, Schlossberg emphasizes [PAINT Nail Bar](#)'s onboarding process and employee benefits. "We over-train, over-support, and over-empower them without condition. Their families and children are equally important to ours. Our staff members know they are our priority, above all else. We make readily available to them opportunities for growth and I have learned, without exception, it is the counterintuitive aspects of leading staff that makes all the difference."

Similarly, Vanessa Yakobson, CEO of [Blo Blow Dry Bar](#), knows the value of investing in her team with continuing education and fair compensation. "Blo has a brand promise: We're here to make you shine. We deliver that promise to our guests as well as to our staff," she shares. "We are focusing on creating opportunities for our team members to enhance their skill sets as Blo adds services to our mix. We also offer the opportunity to sell products and upgraded services to enhance their earnings." Yakobson's ultimate goal: "We want our team to shine in a fun environment where they feel valued and appreciated."

Consumers will seek a whole-human approach





Amanda Carlson-Phillips,
Senior VP/Head of Performance
Innovation, EXOS

“A holistic approach to wellness is being adopted by many of the players in the market today, often starting in one domain of service and slowly expanding to the next. Companies want to drive long-term engagement and impact, the challenge being that new services and offerings don’t simply pile on each other with more to do for the member. They must be thoughtfully integrated and considerate of the member’s experience. **The services, plans, and coaching should complement, not compete, with each other**—all working together to move the member more efficiently toward the outcomes they’re striving for.

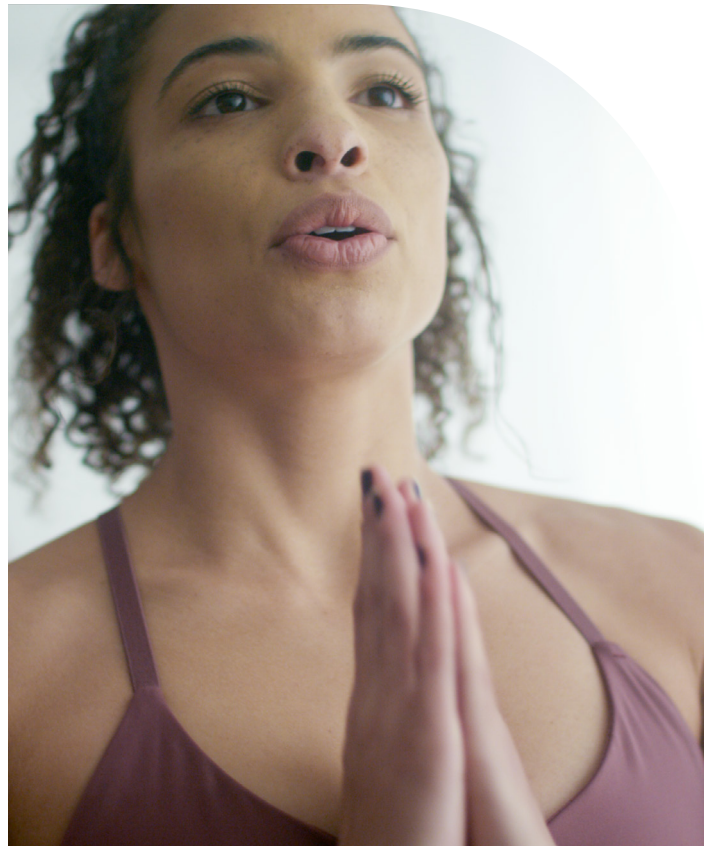
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Consumers have expanded their definition of wellness—it now encompasses a whole lot more than just being in shape. It's reducing stress. It's feeling confident. It's finding a sense of community and belonging. It spans mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions—and, according to recent [Mindbody research](#), consumers will prioritise mental wellness most.

Motivations for movement have shifted, too. Pre-pandemic, the top reasons consumers exercised were to control weight and feel good. Today, consumers say they exercise to reduce stress and feel better mentally. In 2023, fitness and wellness brands with staying power will tap into these deeper motivations and expand their services to better support the mind-body connection.

For [EXOS](#), providing an integrated approach to help clients achieve their goals is nothing new. "This has been core to EXOS since 1999. In fact, it was a founding promise we made to break down walls between practitioners and various domains to support the whole human toward the achievement of their meaningful goals," says Senior VP/Head of Performance Innovation Amanda Carlson-Phillips.

The EXOS leadership team recognises a shift happening in the industry. "A holistic approach to wellness is being adopted by many of the players in the market today, often starting in one domain of service and slowly expanding to the next. Companies want to drive long-term engagement and impact, the challenge being that new services and offerings don't simply pile on each other with more to do for the



member. They must be thoughtfully integrated and considerate of the member's experience," Carlson-Phillips says. "The services, plans, and coaching should complement, not compete, with each other—all working together to move the member more efficiently toward the outcomes they're striving for."

Carlson-Phillips' advice for brands looking to expand their offerings in the future? "The studios that will win will help individuals make sense of the broader array of the types of modalities that we know are critical to long-term success," she shares. "When expanding offerings, we need to connect back to a central methodology that's delivered by experts who are steeped in and evolving that methodology. If this isn't the case, the member is presented with further randomness and a high potential for confusion."

Wearables will make fitness more inclusive





Jenell Riesner, Director
of Marketing and Brand,
iLoveKickboxing



As franchises in the wellness industry, we're no longer exclusively in the fitness vertical. As we look to the future, technology and data management will become a secondary focus for our studios. Just as we make data-driven decisions for marketing and sales, **boutique studios should be considering wearable technology data when making fitness programming decisions** and more personalised recommendations for our members' goals.

According to the [American College of Sports Medicine \(ACSM\)](#), wearable technology is the top fitness trend this year. And with over 60% of Mindbody app users who don some form of wearable, we're not at all surprised.¹ Heading into 2023, wearables will continue to improve results—and accessibility.

"We want fitness to be accessible to everyone, at all times, and the

more it's in front of our clients, the better," says [SPENGA](#) Co-founder Heather Ruff.

Franchise organisations are teaming up with iconic brands—[Orangetheory and Apple](#), for example—to help consumers conveniently keep track of their workouts. "I believe we're going to see more and more of these collaborations between fitness and big brands—and it's a

great thing," says Ruff. "The co-branding and collaborations with bigger tech brands make it easier for studios and gyms to focus on what they do best—training clients—while taking advantage of the innovations a tech company has created."

According to Ruff, wearables won't just be for tracking steps, heart rate, or calories burned. "We'll see more than just the tracking stats with these collaborations. We have so much information and guidance to offer our clients to keep them motivated and engaged in their health, so I foresee [wearables] improving studio-to-client communication," she says. "If clients have access to our guidance and motivation outside the studio, at anytime, anywhere, that's a win for the clients and fitness industry."

[iLoveKickboxing](#) Director of Marketing and Brand Jenell Riesner also believes wearables will create more well-rounded fitness experiences. "As franchises in the

wellness industry, we're no longer exclusively in the fitness vertical. As we look to the future, technology and data management will become a secondary focus for our studios," she says. "Just as we make data-driven decisions for marketing and sales, boutique studios should be considering wearable technology data when making fitness programming decisions and more personalised recommendations for our members' goals. This technology will make modifications or leveled programming based on what members' bodies need that day, a topic for discussion in 2023 and beyond."

WEARABLES
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These days, the world seems to be constantly changing. And while we can't look into a crystal ball to confirm what's next for wellness, we're confident there's much to look forward to in 2023.

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About Mindbody

Mindbody is the leading wellness experience software platform for the fitness, wellness, and beauty industries. Tens of thousands of fitness studios, salons, spas, and integrated health centers worldwide—from the newest entrepreneurs to the largest franchises—use Mindbody's integrated software and payments platform to run, market, and grow their businesses. Consumers use Mindbody to more easily find, engage, and transact with wellness providers in their local communities and around the world.

