



A complete guide to running a fitness challenge

Franchise edition





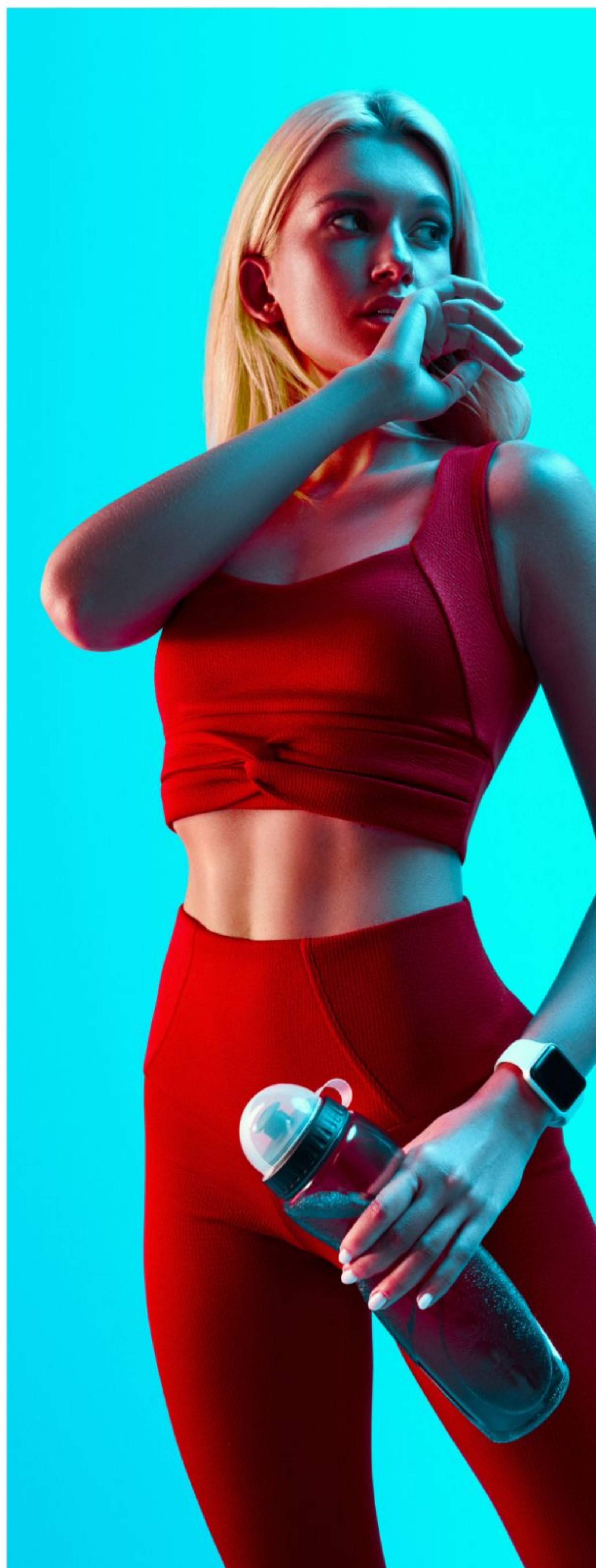
Introduction

Fitness challenges are one of the most in-demand services in fitness today. As Gitnux recorded, around 70% of boutique fitness goes for the social and community aspect – fitness challenges zero in on this trend, **turning individual goals into a community project.**

Many gyms and fitness studios are starting to offer them, but not everyone is doing them well. At Hapana, we've worked with world-class gyms for a decade, and we've picked up a thing or two about fitness challenges.

In this guide, we won't just walk through the 'what' of fitness challenges; we'll have a look into the 'how' and 'why' of making them genuinely innovative.

By the end, you'll be able to transform a standard offering into a standout experience.





Leading innovation with fitness challenges

Only one fitness company made the Financial Times list of the 500 fastest-growing companies in the APAC region: **FitStop**.

Integral to FitStop's marketing strategy are challenges. Fitness challenges are also behind **F45**'s rapid global expansion, behind the rise and fall of **Fitbit**, and behind the success of companies like **Orangetheory**, **Peloton**, and others.

Many charities use the power of fitness challenges to drive their yearly fundraising events. For example, **Cancer Council** has found huge success running The March Charge – a yearly challenge to push your fitness limits in March alongside the rest of the community. Fitness challenges continue to go viral on social media, with challenges like **75 Hard** racking up billions of views.

Why are they so popular?





People look to challenges to make fitness novel – and to feel proud of accomplishing something with clear parameters.

Challenges are genuinely fun, and have what fitness can sometimes lack: community. It's not just about getting fit; it's the thrill of the chase, the camaraderie, and a touch of friendly competition.

We call it "the marathon effect" – a communal sprint toward personal milestones. Plus, they're short-term commitments.

They're a win that can go on your shelf of accomplishments. For people with busy lives, that's much more desirable – and easy – than becoming someone who consistently goes to their local fitness studio for the rest of time immemorial.

As psychology has discussed, what sets apart the concept of a "challenge" is that it includes a sense of opportunity.

The engagement that comes from an opportunity is far higher than engagement from obligation.





Fitstop's fitness challenge evolution

FitStop pushed a challenge called "Refine You" in 2018–2020, which was promoted as a "6 week lifestyle challenge promoting healthy lifestyle and removing the focus on fad diets".

Then in early 2024, FitStop released the "Move More Challenge". This challenge starts for all participants at the same time, becoming a community effort.

This is now their top keyword driving organic traffic to their website on Google (other than their brand name). From a marketing perspective, this is a healthy marker of a strong choice.

As their blog says, "At FitStop, our engagement has largely benefited from technology through our challenge, referral systems and streaks."



Peloton's fitness challenges

Peloton, the popular home fitness company, used to offer a 60-Day Home Fitness Challenge to encourage members to stay active.

Participants commit to working out at least 3 times per week for 60 days using Peloton's bike, tread, or digital app. Those who completed the challenge received a digital badge and were entered into a prize drawing.

These days, Peloton run a variety of self-paced challenges available from the home screen of their app. They also run an annual challenge beginning in January, which totals your minutes spent in classes throughout the year, with rewards for each thousand minutes.





Orangetheory January challenge

Orangetheory Fitness runs a Transformation Challenge every January that focuses on weight loss and body composition changes.

Participants receive a body composition analysis at the start and end of the challenge, and those with the greatest improvements win prizes.

CrossFit Open

CrossFit, a strength and conditioning program, hosts an annual CrossFit Open competition that serves as the first stage of the CrossFit Games season.

Over 5 weeks, athletes complete a new workout each week and submit their scores online. The Open is designed to be accessible to all CrossFit athletes, from beginners to elite competitors.





Fitbit step challenges

Wearable fitness tracker brand Fitbit used to offer various step challenges through its mobile app, and at the height of their market domination (nearly half!) **their success was partly attributed to their challenges.**

These included the Weekend Warrior Challenge, Workweek Hustle, and Daily Showdown, which allowed users to compete against friends and family to see who can take the most steps.

Fitbit eventually sunsetted these challenges after being bought by Google, a decision that was widely condemned by its user base. **Some attribute Fitbit's loss of market share to the removal of challenges.**





Evaluating your current fitness challenge offerings

Given the blistering success of fitness challenges, you may already have your own challenge offerings. As you can see from the examples, many fitness companies go through several iterations of challenges, tweaking them according to the market, their demographic, and their data.

Here's how to evaluate your current fitness challenges:

1. **Analyze** participation data

Look at the percentage of members signing up for your challenges. Are they mostly new members or existing ones?

Ideally, you want a good mix to attract new prospects while keeping current members engaged.





2. Assess social engagement

Do challenge participants tend to bring friends and family along?

This is a key indicator of how engaging and accessible your challenges are. If people are excited to invite others, it means you're creating a fun, community-driven experience.

3. Evaluate the technology

Consider whether your current challenges leverage the right technology to deliver a **seamless, immersive experience**.

Can members easily track their progress, see how they stack up against friends, and share updates on social media? If not, you may be missing out on key engagement drivers.





4. Identify pain points

Put yourself in your members' shoes and go through the challenge experience. Are there any friction points or areas that feel clunky or confusing? Smooth out these pain points to make challenges as satisfying as possible.

5. Gather feedback

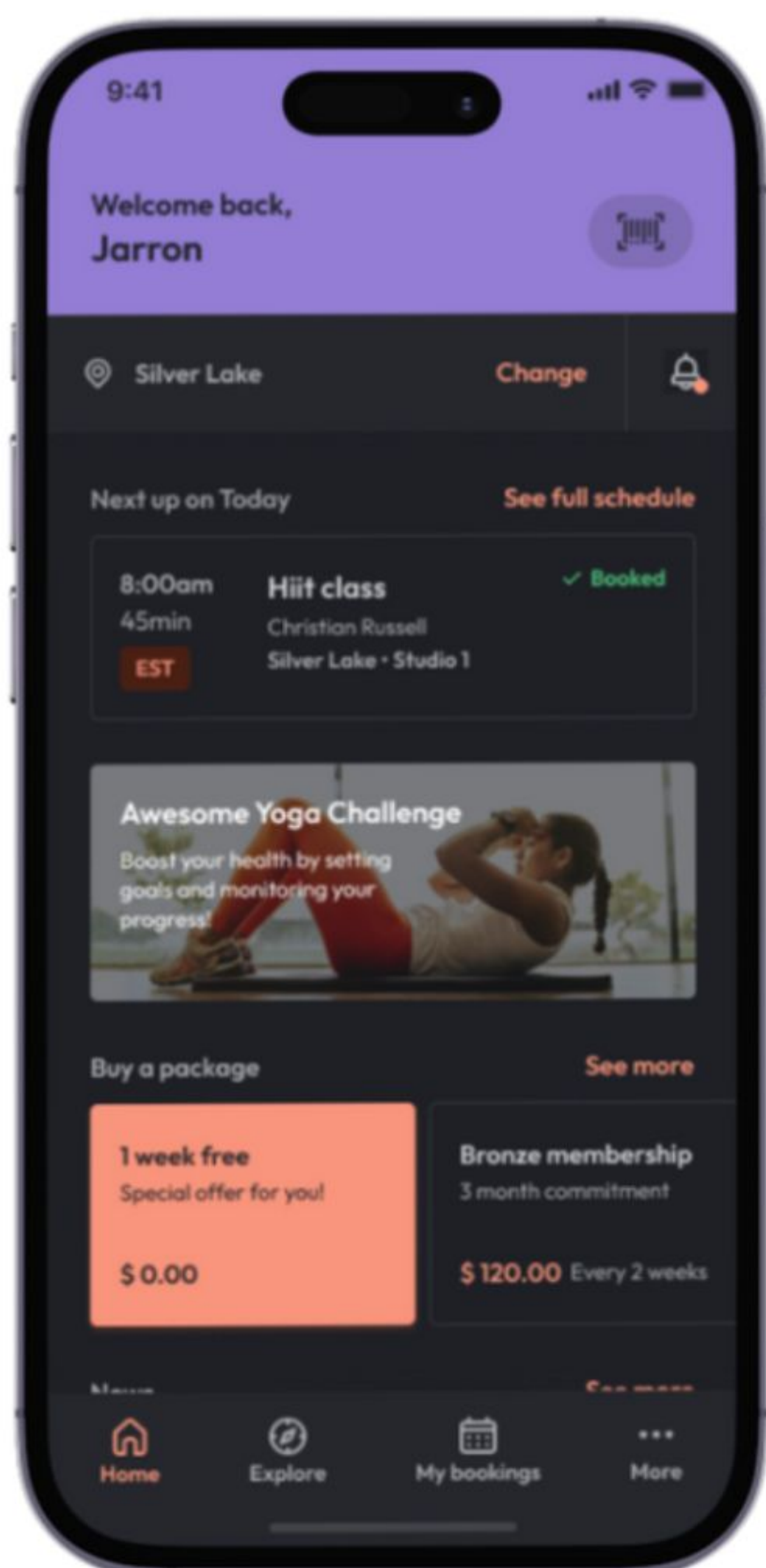
Collect feedback from challenge participants to understand what they liked, didn't like, and would change. You can do this through post-challenge surveys, social media polls, or even informal conversations. Use this input to continuously improve your offerings.

6. Analyze retention data

Look at retention rates for members who have completed your challenges. Are they sticking around longer than those who haven't? If so, it's a good sign that challenges are helping drive long-term engagement and loyalty.

7. Benchmark against competitors

Research what other gyms and studios in your area are offering in terms of challenges. How do your offerings compare in terms of variety, creativity, and value? Aim to differentiate and stand out with unique, innovative challenges.



Leveraging technology to enhance fitness challenges

Technology plays a crucial role in innovating and enhancing fitness challenges. By leveraging the right tools and platforms, fitness studios can create seamless, engaging experiences that drive participation and results.

Hapana's industry-first challenge app is designed to help fitness businesses stand out from the competition and boost revenue.

Here's how it works.

Customizable challenge configuration

Hapana streamlines the challenge creation process, allowing studios to easily set up challenges with defined durations, goals, metrics, and customizable settings.

Studios can schedule timed launches with countdowns or activate challenges instantly using pre-built templates for specific workout or attendance objectives¹.



Seamless member engagement

Hapana's in-app progress tracker keeps members motivated and engaged throughout the challenge.

Participants can access challenge metrics, countdowns, and daily targets, with automatic achievement tick-offs for milestones. **Members can also celebrate their progress on social media directly from the app.**

Powerful analytics and reporting

Hapana provides detailed insights into overall challenge participation and key metrics. **Studio owners can track member progress, attendance, and social sharing to optimize challenges for maximum impact.**

The app's business reporting tools give a clear view of challenge performance and ROI.



Unlock growth, efficiency,
and loyalty for your fitness
business





Scalable across multiple locations

Hapana's challenge app is designed to be easily deployed across multiple franchise locations. Studios can run network-wide or individual challenges, with the ability to customize for local markets. This gives your business consistent branding and messaging while still meeting the unique needs of each community.

New revenue stream potential

By offering paid challenges through Hapana's app, studios can tap into a completely new revenue stream without the costs of developing and maintaining their own technology.

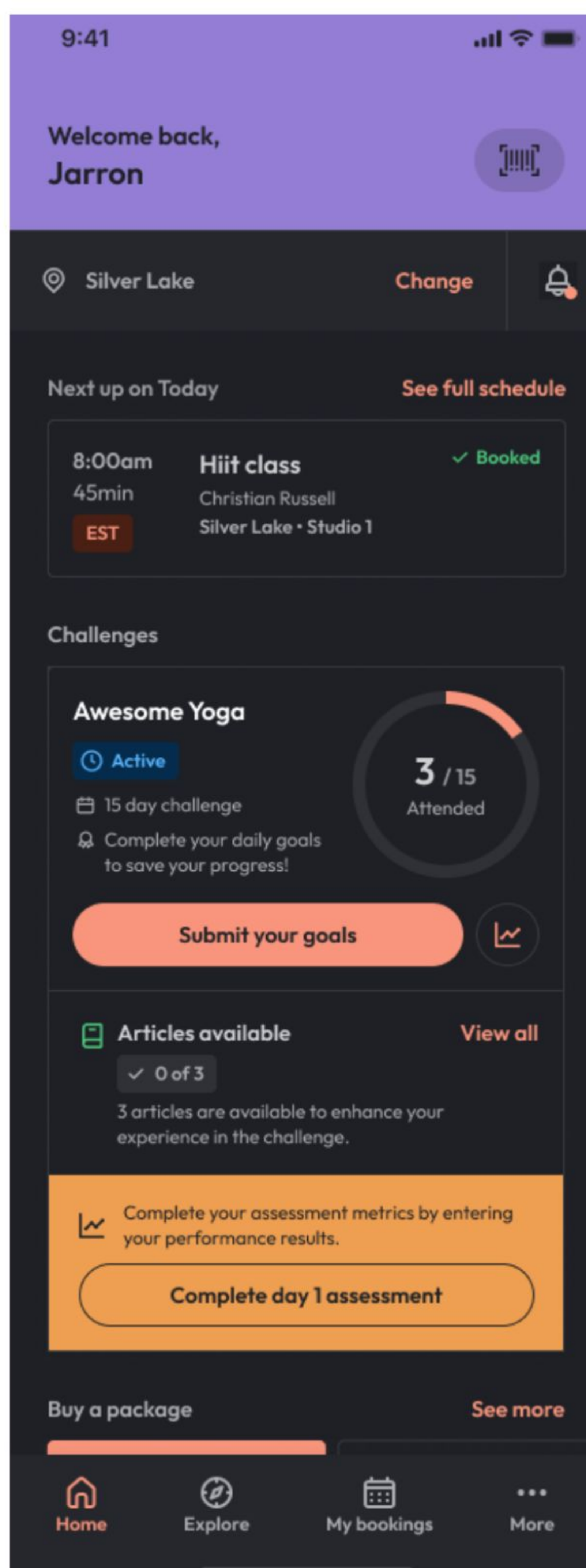
The app's seamless integration allows studios to capture a new market of engaged members.

"Hapana's challenge capability is game changing for our business."

~ Michael Ramsey, Co-Founder of STRONG Pilates.

By leveraging Hapana's innovative challenge app, fitness studios can deliver a captivating experience that keeps members motivated, engaged, and coming back for more.

The app's customization options, powerful analytics, and scalability make it a game-changing tool for studios looking to innovate and stand out in a competitive market.





Case study: **STRONG Pilates**

STRONG Pilates are one of the fitness studios integrating fitness challenges into their revenue streams. They charge \$30 per challenge for each member. **Consider this: 5,000 people, trying a new challenge, every month, for \$30 per challenge.**

This isn't just a novelty. This is a permanent, brand-new revenue stream.

STRONG Pilates were able to capitalize on the growing popularity of fitness challenges without the need for significant investment in internal app development and ongoing maintenance.

Michael Ramsey, Co-founder of STRONG Pilates, says:

"The challenge app is not just a feature; it's a powerful tool to engage our members, welcome newcomers, and ultimately convert them into loyal members of the STRONG Pilates family."

"Hapana's challenge capability is game changing for our business, and we are incredibly grateful to the Hapana team for delivering this innovative solution."



MICHAEL RAMSEY



Step-by-step guide to implementing a new challenge

When creating a new fitness challenge, focus on making it engaging, accessible, and community-driven.

Here are a few non-negotiables (in our opinion):

- **Set clear, measurable goals** that participants can work towards, like number of workouts completed, weight lifted, or calories burned.
- **Incorporate social elements** like leaderboards, team challenges, and the ability to invite friends to make it more fun and motivating.
- **Offer prizes and rewards** for top performers and those who complete the challenge to incentivize participation.
- **Make the challenge accessible** to members of all fitness levels by providing modifications and scaling options.
- **Tie the challenge to your studio's brand and values** to make it feel authentic and meaningful.





Integrating Hapana's challenge app feature

1. Set up your challenge by defining the name, dates, goals, and rules in the Hapana dashboard.

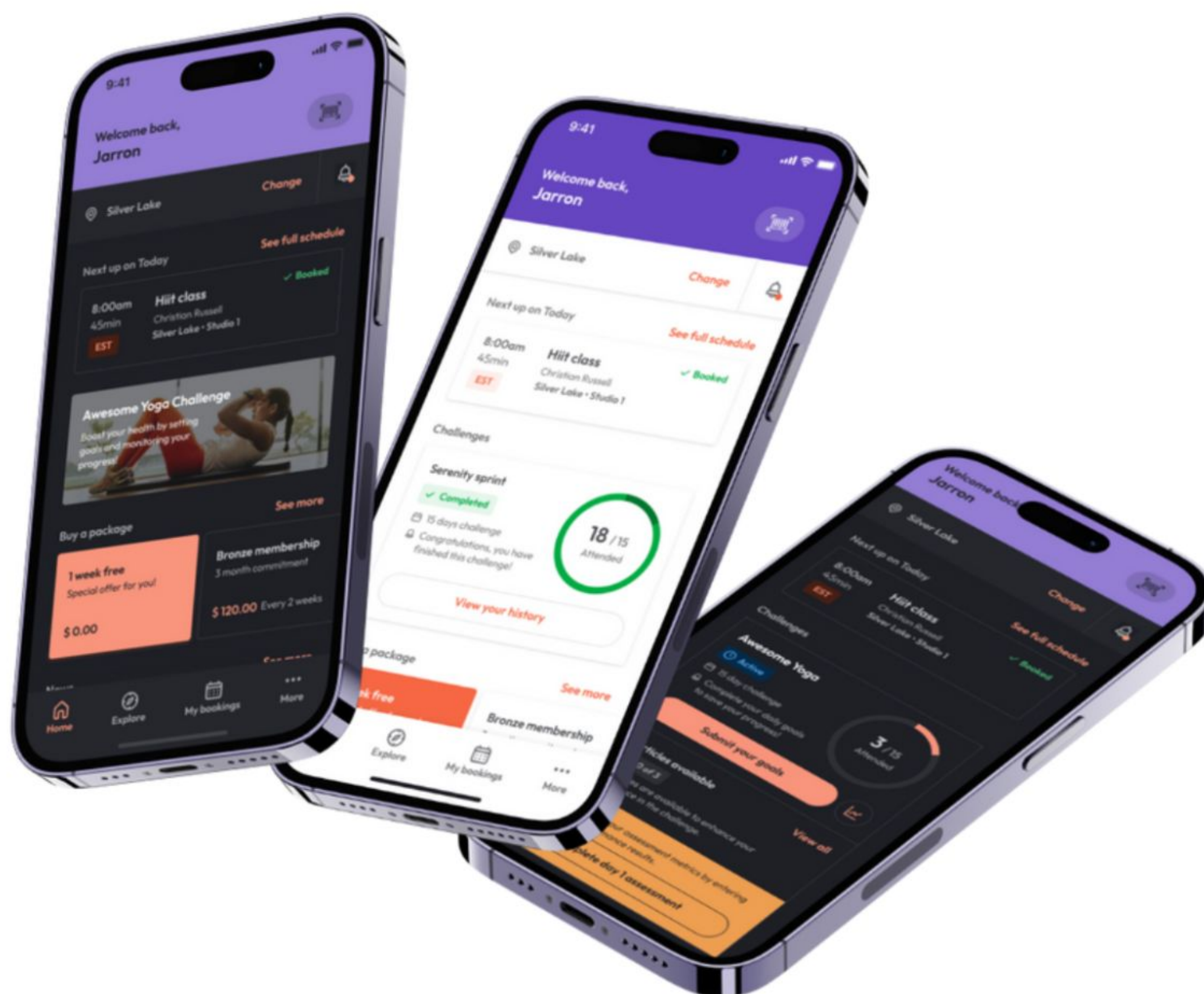
2. Customize the challenge branding with your studio's logo and colors to maintain a consistent look and feel.

3. Enable social features like leaderboards, team challenges, and progress sharing to foster a sense of community.

4. Integrate the challenge into your member app so participants can easily access it and track their progress.

5. Promote the challenge to your members through email, social media, and in-studio announcements to drive sign-ups.

6. Monitor challenge participation and engagement using Hapana's analytics to optimize future challenges.





Tailoring challenges to multiple franchises

When rolling out fitness challenges across multiple franchise locations, consistency is key. However, you also need to allow for customization to meet the unique needs and preferences of each local market. Here are some strategies to strike the right balance:

Establish core challenge elements

Define the essential components that must be consistent across all locations, such as:

- Challenge name, dates, and duration
- Overall goals and rules
- Reward structure and prizes
- Branding and visual elements



Enable local customization

Provide flexibility for franchises to tailor certain aspects of the challenge to their market, such as:

- **Specific workout types** or class formats offered
- Supplementary challenges or **mini-contests**
- **Branded merchandise** or local sponsor prizes

Leveraging Hapana's challenge app feature

Hapana's challenge app makes it easy to deploy consistent challenges across multiple locations while still allowing for local customization.

Key features include:

- **Centralized challenge setup** and management
- Ability to push updates and changes to **all locations**
- **Customizable branding** and content for each franchise
- Localized progress tracking, and **social sharing**



Rolling out a challenge playbook

For the best consistency, make sure to create playbooks that outline all the choices you've made, plus best practices, timelines, and resources for successfully running challenges.

Include:

- Marketing and promotion templates
- Staff training guides
- Participant engagement strategies
- Troubleshooting tips and FAQs





Marketing your new fitness challenges

Effectively marketing your innovative fitness challenges is key to driving participation and standing out from competitors. Here are some tips for you and your franchises:

Leverage social proof

Share testimonials and success stories from past challenge participants to showcase the benefits and build trust. Highlight members who achieved impressive results or had fun experiences.

Example: "I never thought I could do 100 push-ups, but the 30-Day Push-Up Challenge pushed me to my limits. The support from my fellow challengers made all the difference!"

If you've never run a similar challenge, have your staff try it first – and record their honest opinions. Coincidentally, this is a great way to iron out any kinks.





Promote member milestones

Celebrate members hitting challenge milestones, like completing their first workout or reaching a new personal best. Have your franchises share these stories on social media and in-studio to motivate others and create a sense of community.

Example: "Congratulations to Jada for crushing her first 5K during our Run the City Challenge! We're so proud of your dedication and progress."

Offer challenges for all levels

Make sure to offer challenges suitable for members at different fitness levels. Provide modifications and scaling options so everyone feels included and capable of succeeding.

Example: "Our 6-Week Transformation Challenge has options for all levels, from beginner to advanced. No matter where you're starting, we'll help you reach your goals!"





Promote challenge rewards

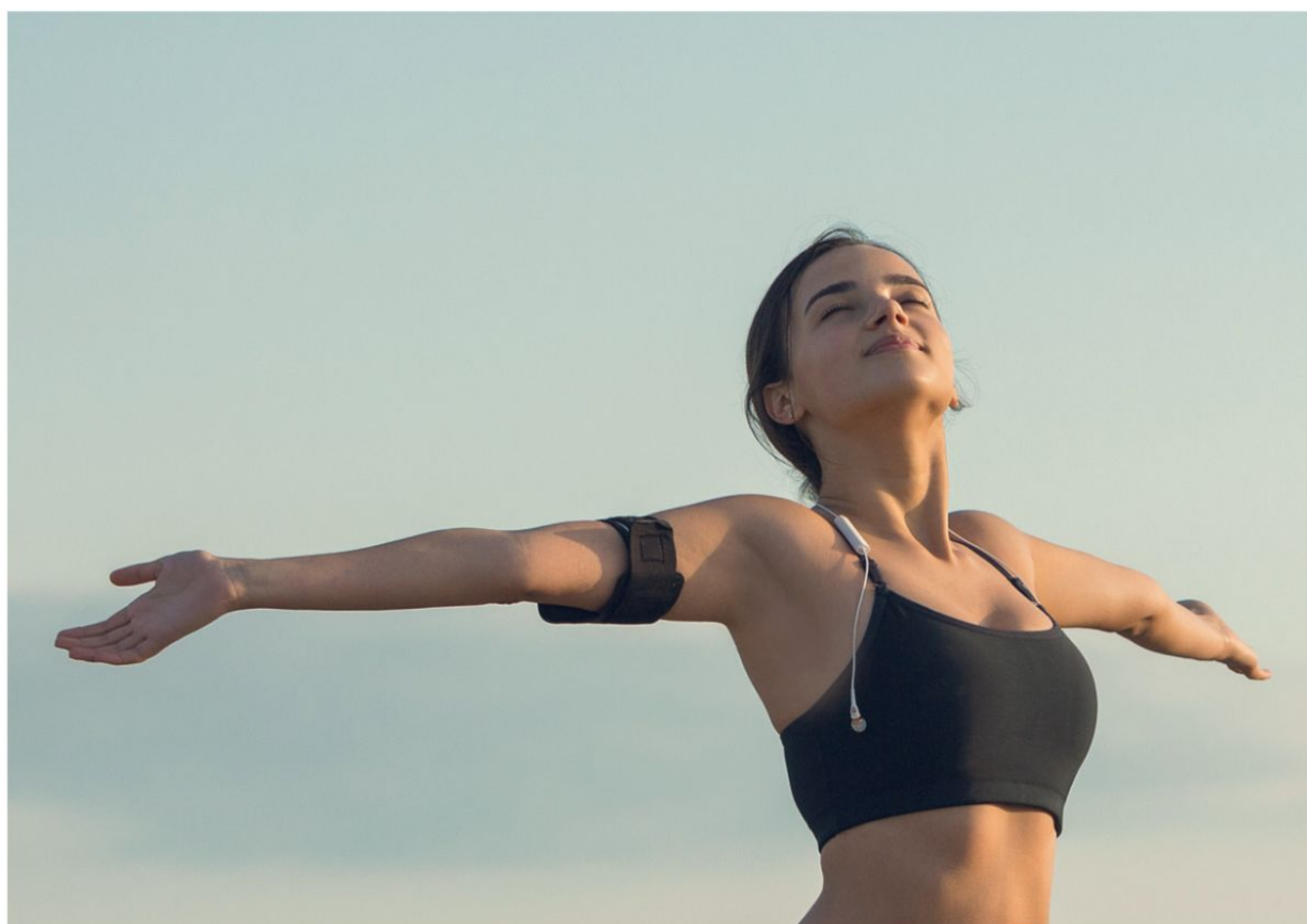
Highlight the exciting prizes and rewards that challenge participants can earn, like branded merchandise, free classes, or discounts on membership. Offer additional incentives for referring friends.

Example: "Join our 30-Day Fitness Challenge for a chance to win a free 1-year membership! Refer 3 friends and get an extra entry."

Use multi-channel marketing

Promote your challenges across multiple channels, including email, social media, in-studio signage, and your website. Create a sense of urgency with countdown timers and limited-time offers.

Example: "Only 5 days left to sign up for our Summer Shred Challenge! Head to our website or ask the front desk for more details."





Innovate and stand out with Hapana's challenge app feature

Hapana's challenge app is designed with both the studio and its members in mind, offering straightforward billing, insightful metrics, and an attractive design to enhance the user experience.

What sets the app apart is its uniqueness in the market. It's a pioneering tool that opens up new revenue opportunities for fitness studios, potentially adding significant income with minimal effort. Our clients are already seeing the potential, adding it as a strategic addition to their services.

By bringing the challenge feature into your studio, you're not just keeping up with the trends; you're setting them.

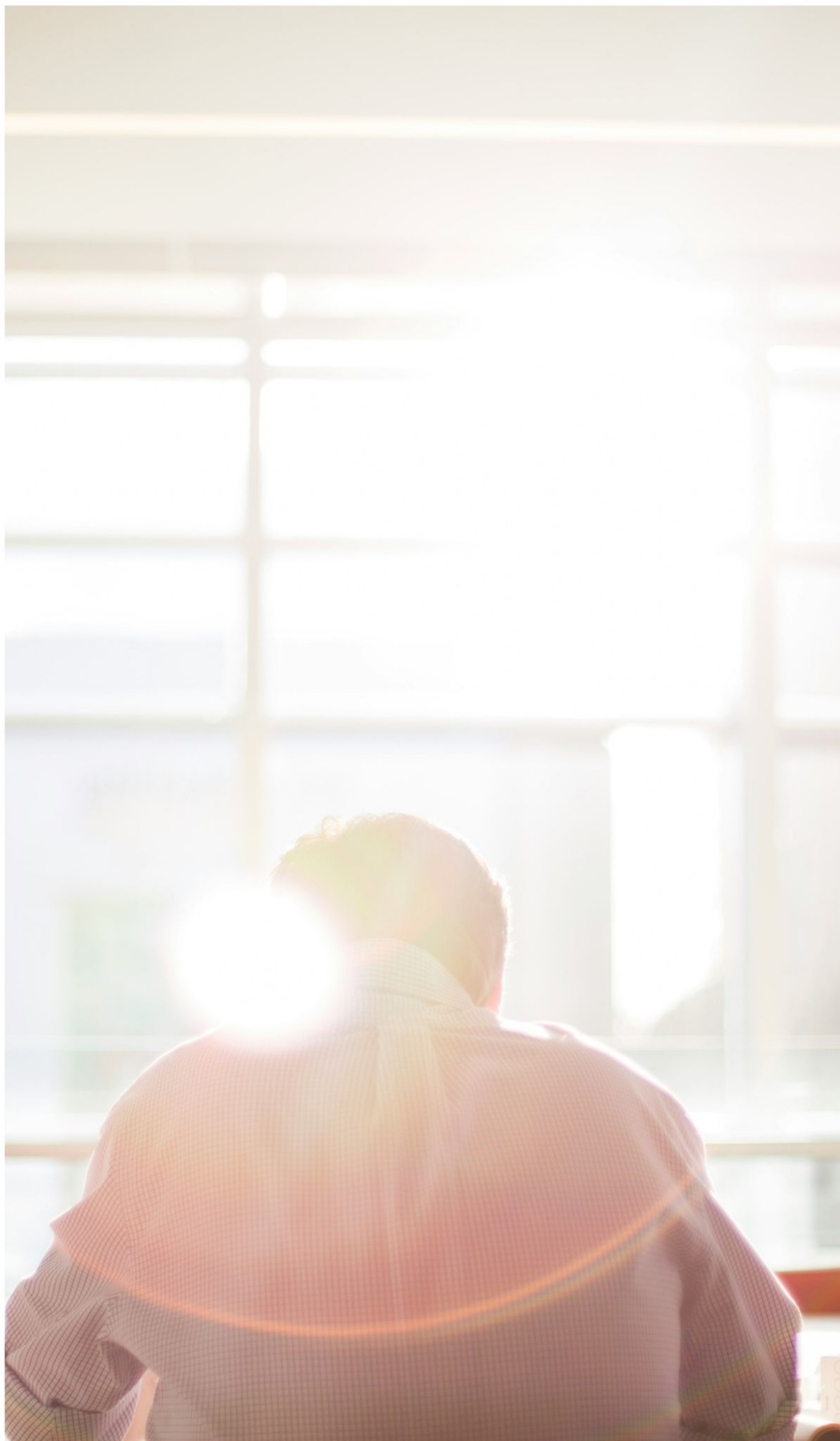
The challenge feature can help retain members while attracting new ones who are looking for that extra something in their fitness routine. It contributes to a vibrant, thriving community, and places you far ahead of your competition – **because this is the only innovation of its kind out there.**

Do you want to add a revenue stream, engage your members, and convert new members to the family?

Contact our friendly team for a ten-minute demo.



**Where real
engagement happens.**





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