

Black Raccoon Newsletter
OCTOBER / NOVEMBER
2026



Building better fitness businesses through stronger strategy, smarter marketing and commercial support that works in the real world.

A note from Ryan & Russell

OPENING

A busy few months. An even bigger opportunity ahead.

There is a common thread running through almost

everything we have been working on recently: fitness businesses do not grow because of one clever advert, one piece of software or one good sales month. They grow when the right proposition, people, marketing, sales processes and operating systems work together.

At Black Raccoon Consulting, we have been putting that thinking into practice across franchise development, local gym growth, supplier partnerships and technology. From helping ambitious brands prepare for expansion to supporting individual clubs with their day-to-day challenges, our work is deliberately practical.

In this edition, we introduce the franchise brands we are supporting, share news of Fit Supply Hub and the evolution of FitLeads into Black Raccoon Growth Engine, and unveil new opportunities for gym owners this autumn.



What has been keeping us busy?

Franchise development work, growth planning for clubs, the build-out of our supplier platform, the rebrand of FitLeads into Growth Engine, new offers for operators and the continued expansion of our educational content.

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Fitness businesses grow when strategy, marketing, sales and systems all work together.

Why this newsletter matters

We did not want a bland company update. We wanted something that feels like a proper publication: useful, well designed and worth reading. So this newsletter is intended to do two jobs at the same time. First, it gives you a clearer view of what we are doing, who we are working with and where we believe the biggest opportunities sit in the market. Second, it is designed to be helpful in its own right. Whether you run a single gym, a multi-site group, an established franchise network or a business that supplies the industry, we hope the ideas in these pages help you think differently about growth.

— Ryan Charlesworth & Russell Valler

Franchise spotlight

FEATURE 01



Helping ambitious fitness brands build, grow and scale

Franchising is about much more than selling territories. The strongest networks need a compelling customer proposition, a commercially realistic operating model, effective recruitment, dependable systems and local support that helps individual operators succeed. That is why our franchise work always connects brand ambition with practical delivery.



Studio35



Altipeak



FIT Round My Baby



RE-UP



Aquababies Global

More partners coming on board soon

How we support franchise businesses

- Franchise strategy and business model development
- Franchise recruitment and lead generation
- Enquiry handling and sales structures
- Pre-sales and local club marketing
- Franchisee support and operational planning - Your Early stage BDM team
- Commercial materials for prospects and investors

Why this matters

A franchise can only scale sustainably if the proposition is clear, the commercial model is realistic and the support structure is strong. Recruitment may attract attention, but long-term success comes from helping every location perform well once it opens.

Email franchising@blackraccoon.org for details

Current franchise partners

STUDIO35 & ALTIPEAK



Studio35

Studio35 offers a supportive, non-intimidating exercise experience built around a 35-minute Milon circuit. It is a concept designed to appeal to people who want a more guided and accessible route into exercise. Our work has included local marketing, pre-sales support, lead generation and helping locations turn enquiries into members.



Altipeak

Altipeak brings specialist simulated-altitude training into a commercial fitness proposition with significant potential. We are supporting the brand with franchise prospecting, investor and operator targeting, and the systems that take an enquiry from first contact to a meaningful business conversation.



Why Studio35 matters

Studio35 is a strong reminder that successful fitness businesses do not need to be intimidating to be effective. Clear positioning, a welcoming experience and consistent local marketing can be powerful drivers of growth when backed by the right systems.

Why Altipeak matters

Altipeak demonstrates a different kind of commercial opportunity. Innovative concepts create interest, but the real challenge is turning that interest into structured conversations with the right people and scaling at the right time, with the right systems in place.

Current franchise partners

FIT ROUND MY BABY, RE-UP, AQUABABIES



FIT Round My Baby

FIT Round My Baby is built around fitness sessions for mums where babies can attend too. That creates a distinctive customer proposition, a supportive community feel and a flexible opportunity for both franchisees and gym operators looking to add new revenue streams.



RE-UP

We are pleased to be working with RE-UP and will continue to share more as the approved public positioning develops. What matters now is that it sits within the wider portfolio of ambitious brands we are proud to support.

Aquababies Global

Established in 1990, Aquababies Global brings 36 years of experience in children's swimming education to its UK franchise and international growth plans. Its wider pathway includes PABA, Newborn Sensory, Swimbaree and Swimba, alongside the SSSS Framework™.

A message to ambitious brands

If your business is considering franchising, if recruitment has slowed, or if franchisees need stronger commercial support, Black Raccoon can help you assess the model, strengthen the proposition and build the right systems for growth.

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Great franchise growth is built on a credible proposition, a well supported operator and a commercially strong local offer.

IS YOUR BUSINESS READY TO BECOME THE NEXT SUCCESS STORY?

AUTUMN OFFER

25% off our consultancy fees

For new clients who sign up to work with us in October or November 2026.

25%
OFF FEES

Why gym owners come to us

- Not enough enquiries
- Plenty of leads but too few sales
- Inconsistent follow-up and poor conversion
- Member attrition holding the business back
- Weak reporting and limited accountability
- A growth plan that feels unclear or reactive

What you are really investing in

Black Raccoon is not just about ads. We help operators look at the business commercially: the offer, the customer journey, the sales structures, the follow-up, the operational detail and the management information that influences decision making. Done well, that support should help the business become clearer, stronger and easier to grow.

Important note

The 25% offer applies to new clients who agree to work with us during October or November 2026. The final scope of support and all fee details are confirmed before engagement. We do not guarantee a specific financial return because every business, team and local market is different.

Consultancy should not feel like another overhead. It should feel like a practical investment in stronger sales, stronger systems and better

commercial performance.



Fit Supply Hub

FEATURE 03

Finding the right supplier for your fitness business just got easier.

Fit Supply Hub exists because sourcing suppliers

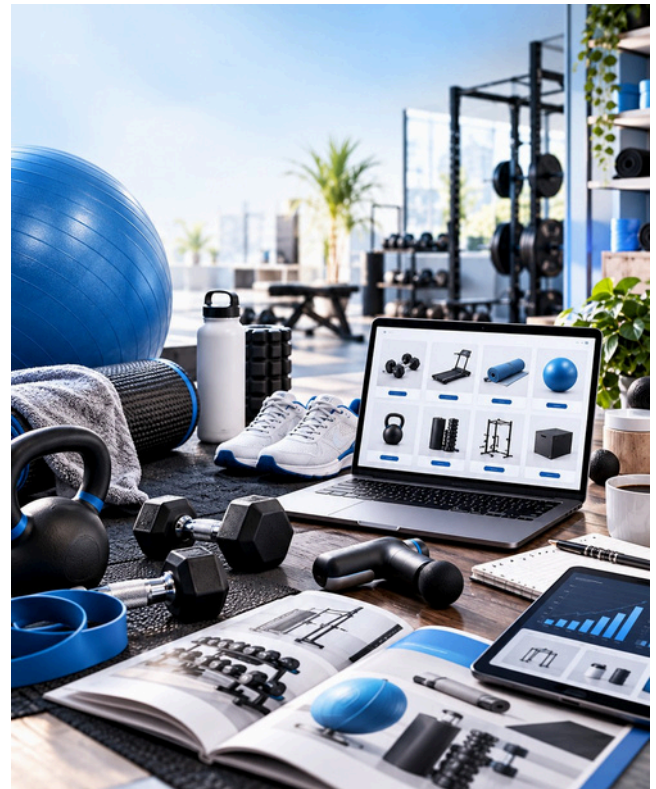
in the fitness industry can take far longer than it should. Busy operators are often left researching websites, asking around the industry and trying to compare options without a clear central place to start. Fit Supply Hub is designed to simplify that process.

For gym owners and operators

Discover suppliers across equipment, flooring, recovery, wellness, software, marketing, facility services and more. The aim is to save time, make better buying decisions and help operators find specialists that fit their needs.

For suppliers

If your business sells to the fitness industry, Fit Supply Hub offers a route to increased visibility, sector exposure and the potential for stronger connections with operators who are actively exploring solutions.



Why this matters

The fitness industry is full of strong suppliers, but the buying journey for operators is often fragmented. Fit Supply Hub helps shorten that journey and makes it easier for gyms to discover the partners that may be right for them. It also creates a better platform for suppliers to present what they do in a more focused environment.

www.fitsuppluhub.co.uk

Our Premier Partners

Ergoline

fibodo

OpsPal

Orbit4

fifteen
master through technology group

clubbright

freemotion

CFM



MUSCLE
SQUAD

Introducing Black Raccoon Growth Engine

FORMERLY FITLEADS

FitLeads is evolving into Black Raccoon Growth Engine.

The name change matters because the offer has become broader. Successful growth requires more than ads. It requires a connected system that moves someone from awareness to enquiry, from enquiry to follow-up, from follow-up to appointment and from appointment to sale.

Digital ads Meta and Google campaigns, offers and audience targeting

Landing pages Focused pages and funnels designed to convert traffic

CRM & pipelines Lead management, task tracking and sales visibility

Automations Email, SMS, reminders, missed appointment follow-up

Reporting Clearer visibility of what is working and what is not



Business benefits

- Faster responses to enquiries
- Fewer leads lost through weak follow-up
- Stronger coordination between marketing and sales
- Less administrative repetition
- Better visibility of pipeline performance
- A clearer route from campaign to commercial outcome
- Campaign management
- AI communication assistance
- Website Build

The core idea

We do not want businesses to buy leads and then hope for the best. We want them to build a more dependable growth engine. That means combining advertising, follow-up, customer communication, task management and reporting in a way that supports real sales conversations.

"

Stop buying leads. Start building a growth engine.

DIGITAL MARKETING SUPPORT

Everything you need to attract, convert and retain more members.



Strategic Marketing Plans

A clear plan to grow your membership and revenue.



Websites & Landing Pages

High converting, mobile friendly and built for gyms.



Ad Campaigns

Meta, Google and local campaigns designed to generate quality enquiries.



Sales & Follow-Up Automation

Turn more enquiries into members with automated email, SMS and AI support.



Content Creation

Engaging social media, reels, graphics and videos that get results.



Ongoing Support

A dedicated team with over 40 years of fitness business experience.



PART OF THE

BLACK RACCOON GROWTH ENGINE



WEBSITES &
LANDING PAGES



META & GOOGLE
ADS



CRM &
AUTOMATION



AI LEAD
ENGAGEMENT



EMAIL & SMS
MARKETING



SOCIAL MEDIA
CONTENT



REPORTING
& INSIGHTS

Meet the people behind Black Raccoon

THE TEAM



RC

Ryan Charlesworth — Managing Director

Ryan brings more than 25 years of fitness and leisure industry experience spanning club operations, sales, marketing, ownership and consultancy. He founded Black Raccoon Consulting in 2017 and is passionate about helping businesses move from reactive activity to deliberate commercial growth. Ryan is also closely involved in Fit Supply Hub, Growth Engine and the Inside Track podcast.

ryancharlesworth@blackraccoon.org

RV

Russell Valler — Chief Operations Director

Russell brings more than 15 years of fitness industry experience and the perspective of someone who has owned and operated gyms as well as advised them. His background includes ownership of seven gyms together with hands-on involvement in operations, pre-sales and franchise growth. He adds practical operational insight to the strategic work we do for clients.

russellvaller@blackraccoon.org

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Together, Ryan and Russell combine commercial thinking with practical delivery — from generating demand and structuring sales processes to supporting long-term business growth.

The £349 joint marketing beta test

LAUNCHING IN
DECEMBER

12 Day Xmas Gym Pass

£20

Train for 12 days this Christmas for just £20

20
MAX GYMS

£349
PER MONTH

1
DEC

Up to
£4000
spend

Independent & franchise gyms often face the same problem: they need a consistent flow of enquiries, but budget has to stretch across creative, ad spend, landing pages, follow-up systems and reporting. Our December beta test is designed to test what happens when a group of gyms approaches that challenge together rather than separately.

What the £349 includes

The monthly £349 fee is the full beta-test price.

It includes:

- The advertising budget,
- Campaign design,
- Campaign setup
- Free setup and use of FitLeads / Black Raccoon Growth Engine for the campaign.
- Links to your payment system
- There is no extra ad spend on top.

Why join the beta?

Because it offers a more accessible route to professionally coordinated marketing. It is designed for gyms that want design, setup and lead follow-up support without trying to piece everything together on their own. Places are capped at a maximum of 20 gyms.

Please note lead volume may differ between clubs

Deadline sign up - 15th Nov

We will set up, manage and run the campaign & provide you with weekly stats on the performance.

E-mail ryancharlesworth@blackraccoon.org for details

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This is a beta test, so final operating terms will be confirmed before enrolment. No specific lead or sales volume is guaranteed, but the goal is to create a stronger, more complete route from advertising to real membership conversations.

Resources, downloads and the Inside Track podcast

LEARN WITH



Free resources and blog content

Our website includes a growing library of free resources for fitness business operators. Two featured downloads are Opening Your Gym, Your How-To Guide and Take Control, each designed to help owners think more clearly about growth, operations and decision making. We will continue to build out this area with useful articles, guides and practical downloads rather than generic content.

Inside Track podcast

Inside Track is where good business conversations happen. Ryan and Russell use the podcast to speak with owners, franchise founders, suppliers and industry voices about what is really happening in the world of fitness business growth. The focus is on honest stories, practical lessons and discussions that help listeners think differently.

Would you like to be our next guest?

If you have built something interesting, learned valuable lessons or have a perspective the industry could benefit from, we would love to hear from you. We are particularly keen to speak with gym owners, founders, suppliers and innovators who can share real-world insights rather than empty promotion.

Useful links to include

- blackraccoon.org/downloads-br
- blackraccoon.org/gym-presale-how-to-2025
- blackraccoon.org/take-control-gym-ownership-2022
- blackraccoon.org/inside-track

[EXPLORE THE PODCAST](#)



BLACK RACCOON
CONSULTING

STRATEGY | MARKETING | SALES | SYSTEMS

FITNESS
BUSINESSES
STRONGER
TOGETHER

Gym Growth Network 5 Day Challenge

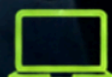
Free registration for gym owners,
health clubs and fitness businesses



Monday 16th -
Friday 20th Nov



Sessions held
1pm - 3pm BST



Online
challenge

Practical, no-fluff guidance to help you grow a stronger gym business

FREE

**OPEN TO
ANY CLUB**

What the challenge will cover



Understanding your business, its KPI's and
setting targets



How to market your Gym - Not just meta ads



The sales process and how to convert leads



Improving your retention



Better systems and operations

Why Register your interest?

- Get clear on the numbers that actually drive your gym - understand the KPIs that matter, where you are now and what realistic targets you should be working towards.
- Build a stronger marketing plan - look beyond Meta ads and identify more ways to generate consistent enquiries from your local market.
- Convert more leads into members - improve your sales process, follow-up and customer journey so fewer opportunities are lost.
- Keep members for longer - identify practical ways to improve retention, engagement and the overall member experience.
- Create a better-run business - strengthen your systems, operations and accountability so the gym becomes easier to manage and better positioned to grow.

Register Now >

gymgrowthnetwork.co.uk/gym-growth-challenge



Ryan Charlesworth
Black Raccoon Consulting



Russell Valler
Black Raccoon Consulting



blackraccoon.org
Gym Growth Network

Helping fitness businesses grow through better strategy, marketing, sales and systems

