



Journal of  
Case Research  
and Inquiry

Cases, Notes and Articles

A publication of the Western  
Casewriters Association

April 2024

## **GYMREALM: SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS BEYOND BORDERS**

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The online meeting of the GymRealm team at the end of the second quarter of the year had just finished. GymRealm, based in Bulgaria, offered a gym management software to sports facilities, which included a low-cost payment processing solution. Despite announcing good results, CEO Dimitar Georgiev knew that his company could do much better. He was convinced that GymRealm could achieve a huge expansion in the U.S. market. GymRealm had already stepped on American soil, and so far had overcome the obstacles it had met: local tax and fiscal regulations and the language barrier. He knew that his company could do better, and he intended to conquer the U.S. market.

Dimitar thought, *“How can we make a significant expansion on the US market? Is our internal organization solid enough to sustain potential expansion? Do we have to improve our customer support?”*

### **Success Story**

In 2011, two students from the Technical University of Varna, Bulgaria, decided to create a social network for sports and active people. Martin Christov was writing the code for this platform, with Dimitar Georgiev working with him. At the same time, Dimitar was working on another project – gym management software.

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The authors developed the case for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of the situation. The case and its accompanying instructor's manual were anonymously peer reviewed and accepted by the *Journal of Case Research and Inquiry, Vol. 9, 2024*, a publication of the Western Casewriters Association. The authors and the *Journal of Case Research and Inquiry* grant state and nonprofit institutions the right to access and reproduce this manuscript for educational purposes. For all other purposes, all rights are reserved to the authors. Copyright © 2024 by Tania Kishkin, Nadya Hristova, Taulant Mecaj & Ivan Dzhumulov. Contact Tania Kishkin, Southern Industrial Zone, ul. "Svoboda Bachvarova" 12, 2700 Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria, [trk237@aubg.edu](mailto:trk237@aubg.edu).

In 2012 venture capital funds started to appear in Bulgaria. There were announcements that Launch Hub and Eleven Venture Capital were funding start-up companies. At that time, Martin and Dimitar never thought of their projects as start-ups. It was Martin who heard of the venture capital opportunity and initiated the application for funding. Martin and Dimitar prepared a short video of what they were doing. Dimitar remembered:

*“We didn’t know we had to make a 5-minute pitch or how to make it, we didn’t know we had to prepare a presentation to fit in 15 minutes ... now this is common knowledge, but back in 2011-2012 there was no one to tell us what to do. We asked friends and colleagues if they were aware of the application process, but no one could help. That was the beginning of an era.”*

On the first day of the business pitch, Martin and Dimitar had to appear and make a presentation to a group of mentors, then on the second day to a commission. The mentors were excited with the idea of the software, but the presentation did not go well. Dimitar remembered *“I wasn’t happy with our performance and also didn’t feel this was the right place for us, so I decided we should leave.”* As they were leaving, one of the mentors hurried up to catch them, and spent a few extra minutes with the students. He gave them constructive feedback, specifically noting that they were pitching two different products, and should focus on only one of them. He noted that Dimitar was a better presenter than Martin.

The students had one day to redo their presentation and present a video to the commission. They had to decide which of the two products they would present. They spent the night in discussion, preparation of slides, video-shooting, assembling information, predicting financial performance, emphasizing added-value. The product they decided to present would be called GymRealm – a gym management software, cloud-based, with an online booking system, access control integration, and other features. The feedback from the second day was excellent. The mentors told Martin and Dimitar that they had outperformed expectations and demonstrated great progress from the previous day. Empowered by the commission's praise, Martin and Dimitar finalized their decision to spotlight GymRealm, recognizing its potential to impress investors and propel their venture forward.

In 2013, GymRealm Technologies got funded by the Eleven Venture Fund. The initial funding was \$100,000 USD split into 4 tranches. In 2015, GymRealm received additional funding after attracting Walltopia<sup>1</sup> as an investor, a world leader in designing and manufacturing climbing wall facilities.

GymRealm was established with a clear mission – to build powerful software in order to make the life of the facility owners easier. Ever since their journey had started, GymRealm had focused on the needs of clients and worked hard to help gyms increase their revenue. GymRealm provided easy-to-use holistic solutions which meet the constantly changing and increasing demands of the health and wellness industry. A partial list of GymRealm’s products can be found in Exhibit 1.

At first, GymRealm focused exclusively on the fitness industry and eventually acquired the largest market share in this segment in Bulgaria. After Walltopia joined as a shareholder, GymRealm discovered that climbing gyms were a brand-new niche and Walltopia was building one facility after another all around the world. And the best part – there were not many competitors in the niche. Starting with climbing gyms would open other opportunities in a variety of sports, amusement and family entertainment centers in different countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Bulgaria's Walltopia to acquire stake in GymRealm Technology (Mar 06, 2019) by Mario Tanev – <https://seenews.com/news/bulgarias-walltopia-to-acquire-stake-in-gym-realm-technology-645609>

Exhibit 1. GymRealm's Portfolio



### *Dreaming of the USA*

Dimitar believed that the company had the potential to be among the top players worldwide. However, in order to gain international recognition, GymRealm had to demonstrate solid presence in the largest markets, the U.S., which in 2022 had 112,912 gym, health & fitness club businesses.<sup>2</sup> According to forecasts, the global gym management software market was expected to expand significantly by 2030 and North America would account for 37%<sup>3</sup> of the market growth. So, what better place to start than the USA?

Dimitar thought about the added value he could provide to gym owners operating in the American market. He was convinced that this was the only way to attract clients who worked with the well-established local rivals. MindBody, Inc.<sup>4</sup> as of 2022 covered 25%<sup>5</sup> of the US market for wellness and leisure facilities and additionally operated in 150 countries providing services

<sup>2</sup> Gym, Health & Fitness Clubs in the US - Number of Businesses (Oct 24, 2023) – <https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-statistics/number-of-businesses/gym-health-fitness-clubs-united-states/> Full report obtained by Prof. McGuire

<sup>3</sup> Gym management software market size to increase by USD 149.32 million: North America will account for 37% of market growth – Technavio (January 25, 2023), PR Newswire – <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/gym-management-software-market-size-183000420.html?guccounter=1>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mindbodyonline.com/>

<sup>5</sup> Mindbody Inc. Case Study (21 May 2019) by TDM Growth Partners - <https://www.tdmgrowthpartners.com/insight/mindbody/>

to more than 68,000 venues. RockGymPro<sup>6</sup> was a recognizable brand for the climbing industry, created back in 2008 and its clients represented more than 90%<sup>7</sup> of the climbing gyms in the US. RockGymPro seemed to be the most prominent competitor of GymRealm on American soil in this niche. CenterEdge<sup>8</sup> provided software solutions to more than 1,000<sup>9</sup> entertainment venues in the U.S. and Canada. Another leading software platform in the leisure and entertainment industry competing with GymRealm was Roller<sup>10</sup> – an Australian start-up<sup>11</sup> as old as GymRealm (2011), already serving more than 1,500 centers in the sector worldwide. More detailed information on the competitors of GymRealm worldwide can be found in Exhibit 2.

To catch up with rivals, GymRealm integrated its software with American banks that owned payment processing platforms, which meant lower fees for the gym owners who worked with middlemen such as Stripe and PayPal.

The company was also ready to customize its products in order to gain market recognition and trust. GymRealm's products complied fully and were adapted to the local tax and fiscal regulations. However, building a strong presence in the US would require more. Having a dedicated team on American ground was necessary. Hiring local talent, establishing partnerships, and investing in marketing efforts would also be fundamental in this endeavor. But before doing this GymRealm had other internal issues to solve – balancing sales growth and resource allocation.

Dimitar was aware of all obstacles on his way and was still paying close attention to the European market where further expansion was also possible. The European market did not have dominant players and was extremely segmented on a country basis. One of the significant

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.rockgympro.com/>

<sup>7</sup> RGP: Software Powering the Industry (2019, February), Rock Gym Pro, last accessed on 27 July 2023 at <https://www.climbingbusinessjournal.com/rgp-software-powering-the-industry/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://centeredgesoftware.com/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://centeredgesoftware.com/about/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.roller.software/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://pitchbook.com/profiles/company/118800-19#timeline>

competitors was PerfectGym,<sup>12</sup> established in Poland, which managed to reach clients in more than 50 countries (see Exhibit 2), including Bulgaria. In addition, the major U.S. players did not have the much influence in Europe - for instance, RockGymPro which dominated the US climbing gym industry was not present in Europe. The European gyms' and health clubs' market was showing positive trends with the number of facilities increasing by around 30%<sup>13</sup> in the period 2009-2022 (reaching the total of 63 830). Also, the climbing gym industry, a niche GymRealm traditionally found attractive considering its affiliation with Walltopia, was also developing (see Exhibit 3).

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.perfectgym.com/en>

<sup>13</sup> Number of gyms and health clubs in Europe from 2009 to 2022 (Jun 8, 2023), published by Christina Gough  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/275052/total-number-of-health-clubs-in-europe/>

Exhibit 2. Competitors of GymRealm

Gym Management Software	Rock Gym Pro	MindBody	PerfectGym	Roller	CenterEdge	GymRealm
<b>Founded</b>	2008	2001	2014	2011	2004	2011
<b>Service sector</b>	Climbing	Wellness & Leisure	Fitness, Trampolines, Leisure	Entertainment, Climbing	Entertainment	Climbing, Entertainment, Fitness
<b>Origin</b>	USA	USA	Poland	Australia	USA	Bulgaria
<b>Market Share per Service Sector USA</b>	90% <sup>14</sup>	25% <sup>15</sup>	N/A	21,74% <sup>16</sup>	-	<0,01%
<b>Markets Across the World</b>	3 countries	150 countries	55 countries <sup>17</sup>	20 countries	USA & Canada	11 countries
<b>Languages of the software</b>	English only	6 <sup>18</sup>	15 <sup>19</sup>	12 <sup>20</sup>	English only	4
<b>Cloud-based vs. On-premises</b>	On-premises	Cloud-based	Cloud-based	Cloud-based	On-premises	Cloud-based
<b>iOS / Android / Web</b>	Web	iOS / Android / Web <sup>21</sup>	iOS / Android / Web <sup>22</sup>	Web	Web	Web
<b>24/7 support</b>	Business hours e-mail	Live rep	Business hours e-mail	Live rep	Live Rep	Live rep
<b>No. of staff</b>	25+	1 590+	100 <sup>23</sup>	130+	80+	15
<b>No. of venues</b>	700+	68 000+ <sup>24</sup>	1 500+	1 500+	1 000+	430+
<b>Price starts from / monthly</b>	\$104 <sup>25</sup>	\$139	\$129	\$405	\$300	\$60 <sup>26</sup>
<b>2022 Annual Revenue in USD</b>	-	\$350M <sup>27</sup>	\$8,2M <sup>28</sup>	\$25,2M <sup>29</sup>	\$17,06M <sup>30</sup>	\$460K <sup>31</sup>

<sup>14</sup> RGP: Software Powering the Industry (2019, February), Rock Gym Pro, last accessed on 27 July 2023 at <https://www.climbingbusinessjournal.com/rgp-software-powering-the-industry/>

<sup>15</sup> Mindbody Inc. Case Study (21 May, 2019) by TDM Growth Partners - <https://www.tdmgrowthpartners.com/insight/mindbody/https://www.tdmgrowthpartners.com/insight/mindbody/>

<sup>16</sup> ROLLER Customers by Geography (2023) – <https://6sense.com/tech/point-of-sale-pos/roller-market-share>

<sup>17</sup> Perfect Gym Solutions S.A. – <https://www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/health-club-management-company-profile/Perfect-Gym-Solutions-SA/1454#about>

<sup>18</sup> Can my MINDBODY site be translated? – <https://support.mindbodyonline.com/s/article/206574978-Can-my-MINDBODY-site-be-translated?language=de#:~:text=contact%20Technical%20Support,-,Our%20core%20software%20and%20mobile%20apps%20can%20be%20translated%20into,Italian%2C%20Portuguese%2C%20and%20Spanish.&text=Once%20you%20sign%20up%20for,site%20as%20they%20become%20available>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.capterra.ae/software/143255/perfect-gym>

<sup>20</sup> ROLLER software platform raises \$7m for international growth (August 13, 2018) by Ella Baskerville – <https://blooploop.com/technology/news/roller-funding-software-platform/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.getapp.com/customer-management-software/a/mindbody/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.getapp.com/recreation-wellness-software/a/perfect-gym/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.owler.com/company/perfectgym>

<sup>24</sup> <https://getlatka.com/companies/mindbody>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.rockgympro.com/pricing>

<sup>26</sup> <https://gymrealmmanager.com/pricing/climbing-gym>

<sup>27</sup> How MINDBODY hit \$350M revenue and 68K customers in 2023 (2023) <https://getlatka.com/companies/mindbody>

<sup>28</sup> PERFECT GYM SOLUTIONS S.A. (POLAND) Financial Statement 2022 – [https://www.emis.com/php/company-profile/PL/Perfect\\_Gym\\_Solutions\\_SA\\_en\\_4473490.html](https://www.emis.com/php/company-profile/PL/Perfect_Gym_Solutions_SA_en_4473490.html) Appendix attached

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.zoominfo.com/c/roller/347082347>

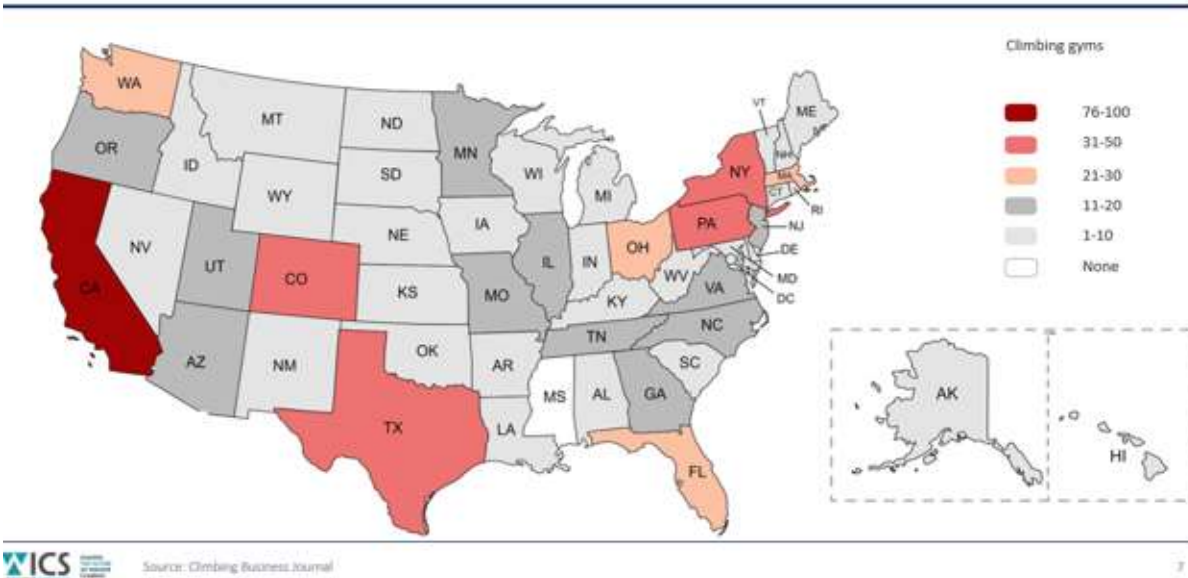
<sup>30</sup> CenterEdge Software – <https://www.konaequity.com/company/centeredge-software-4018978357/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://portal.registryagency.bg/CR/Reports/ActiveConditionTabResult?uic=202964370>

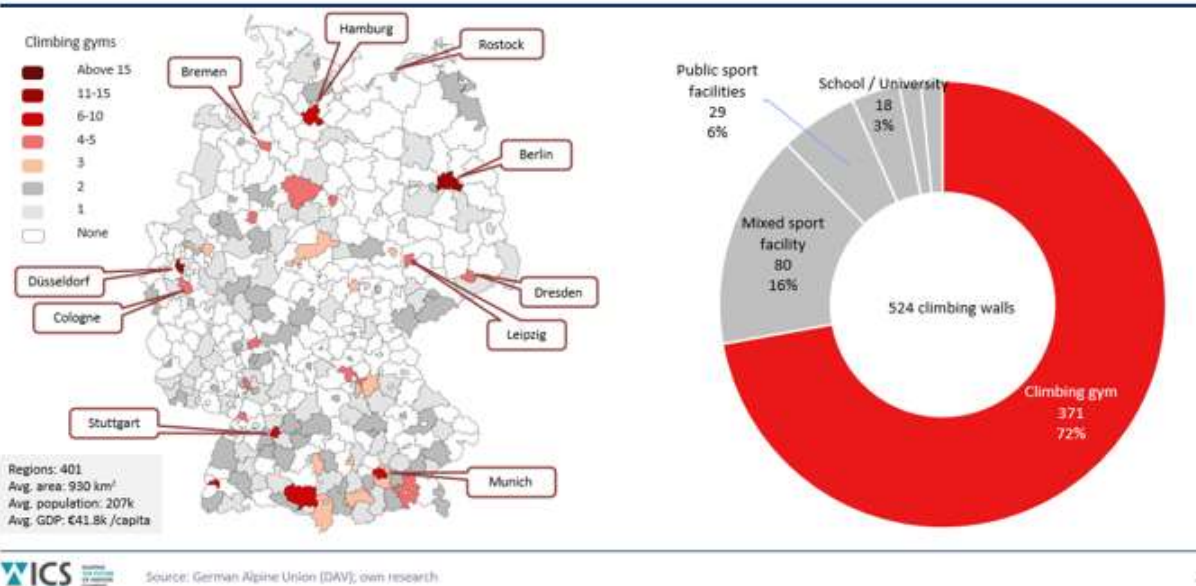


**Exhibit 3. Number of Climbing Gyms in the USA and European countries**

Climbing gyms alone are 641 (out of 1401 walls in total) with 91 in California, 30-40 in New York, Texas, and Pennsylvania and around 10-20 in most other states



Germany has 371 climbing gyms mostly in the Alpine regions and around major cities

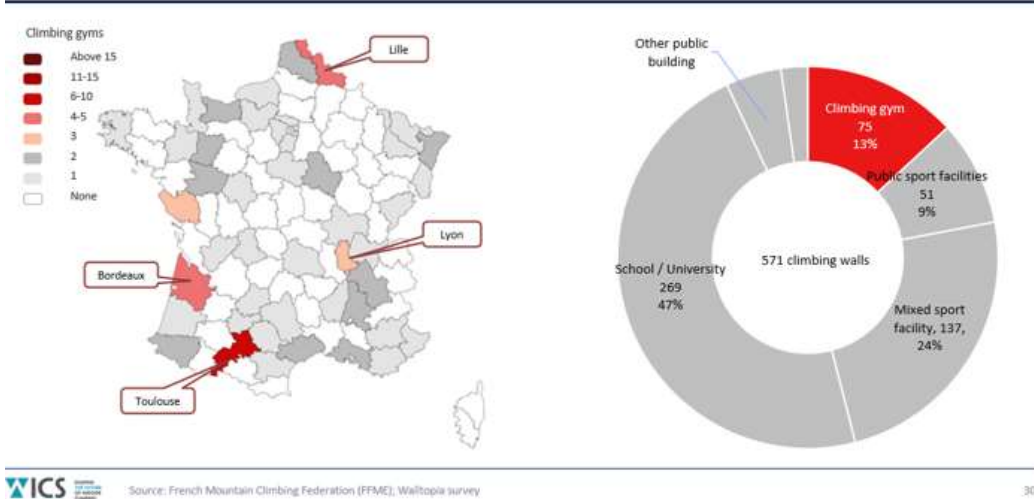


Number of climbing gyms in the US, Germany, France, Austria presented at the World Indoor Climbing Summit (WICS), Bulgaria, in 2023.

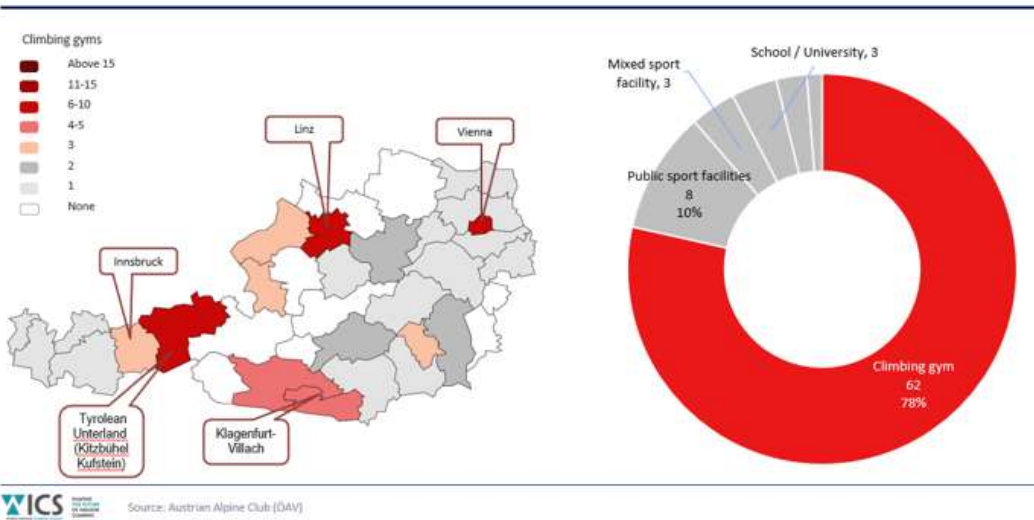
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**Exhibit 3. Number of Climbing Gyms in the USA and European countries, continued**

There are 75 gyms in France (out of 572 climbing walls in total). They are significantly outnumbered by climbing walls in schools and public sport buildings



There are 62 gyms in Austria, mostly around Vienna, Carinthia, and Tyrol



Number of climbing gyms in the US, Germany, France, Austria presented at the World Indoor Climbing Summit (WICS), Bulgaria, in 2023.

### ***GymRealm – A Different Breed***

While it might not be typical for the IT industry, in general the client bases of the companies providing software solutions for sports and health centers were limited to the countries where they had been initially established. This was mainly for one reason: expanding abroad always required adapting products to the local tax, fiscal and other regulations (mostly aimed at transparent and accurate recording of business transactions for combating tax evasion, guaranteeing tax collection, protection of data etc.) and, of course, to the language. Adapting products was costly, and not all businesses were willing to spend the money.

GymRealm managed to overcome many of the issues that had created trouble for its competitors. So far, GymRealm sold in different markets such as Australia, Bulgaria, Egypt, Italy, Malaysia, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Spain, UK and the USA. As a result, the company managed to attract more than 430 business clients worldwide. What made GymRealm different was that it was always focused on the quality of the solutions and services it offered. The company provided better customization than the majority of its international rivals, exclusive features (for example face recognition and integration with different local payment processors for tax savings) and user-friendly cloud-based software.

Despite its relatively small size, GymRealm served a very wide segment of clients – not just fitness clubs, but all types of sports facilities, family entertainment centers, pools, sports clubs, multi-purpose facilities, and was ready to customize the software to the needs of each one of them, if such customizations could later be used again for other clients. GymRealm’s software was web-based and well suited for Android and regular PCs but could not be used on iOS. Nonetheless, the team had developed a mobile app which allowed owners to track the performance of their facilities from any point in the world.

The increasing number of international clients and their differences in size and scope started causing GymRealm difficulties providing high-quality support. The employees of the company, especially the sales team, would receive calls from clients working in different countries 24/7

due to the time zone differences. At one point Dimitar considered putting the support personnel on shifts but he knew that very often the requests of clients required certain work to be done by the software developers. However, all members of the software development team were family people and would most likely disagree to work on shifts. Dimitar was aware that entering new large foreign markets, such as the US, would deepen the issue.

GymRealm generated its revenue from sales of subscriptions of its software products. As a result of its activities, the company had the chance to collect enormous amounts of data regarding the choices and preferences of the people who visited the sports and wellness facilities that used GymRealm's software. GymRealm had invested great effort to guarantee the adequate protection of such data and had no intention of taking further advantage of it, for example by selling it to other companies. When asked why, Dimitar replied: *"I have decided not to go in this direction because for me this is on the edge of law and my values."*

The client base of the company had been growing ever since GymRealm was founded. The company had demonstrated stable financial performance in the last years. (Excerpts from financial statements can be found in Exhibit 4.) GymRealm was the largest player in the Bulgarian market and was competitive internationally. All of this had been achieved without investing much effort or resources in proactive selling, marketing or advertising. GymRealm relied almost exclusively on organic growth and word-of-mouth. In fact, the company was even contacted by a huge operator from South Africa who learned about GymRealm's solution on his own.

Dimitar noted: *"In our business, advertising doesn't work; online advertising doesn't work. If we do that, the clients we'll attract will be some small yoga or Pilates studios. They'll enroll at our lowest subscription level, and GymRealm has many more functionalities than they need. Contacts with people are important. That's why I say word-of-mouth works for us."*

GymRealm had reached its current sales without relying on the customer network developed by its shareholder, Walltopia. The personnel of the two companies knew each other well but their teams had not established a practice of referring clients to each other, organizing advertising campaigns jointly, or participating together at exhibitions of the sports and entertainment industry.

**Exhibit 4. Excerpt from GymRealm’s Financial Statements for the Period 2018-2022**

	2018 (TBGN)	2019 (TBGN)	2020 (TBGN)	2021 (TBGN)	2022 (TBGN)
Net sales	436	731	580	353	372
Operational costs (incl. personnel costs)	594	763	756	915	839
Personnel costs	483	584	622	635	486
Profit	34	13	14	14	10

*Financial results of GymRealm Technology AD were obtained from the published financial statements of the company at the Bulgarian Commercial Register to the Bulgarian Registry Agency available at <https://portal.registryagency.bg/>. The file of GymRealm Technology AD can be accessed on: <https://portal.registryagency.bg/CR/Reports/ActiveConditionTabResult?uic=202964370>*

“They are all happy!” was what Dimitar Georgiev replied when asked about the levels of customer satisfaction with the products, services and support provided by his organization. GymRealm had never carried out surveys among its clients, but still managed to collect feedback, mostly through informal conversations. (Reviews can be found in Exhibit 5).

The company planned to carry out more detailed customer research at a later stage: “*Early September maybe, then the people who make decisions will be at work after the summer holiday season. There is a huge turnover of employees working at the reception desks who are generally not really into the details. We need to focus on the opinions of owners and managers only,*” Dimitar Georgiev explained.

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### Exhibit 5. Reviews of GymRealm

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*"We had issues with tax calculation, since there are 3 types of tax on different products in Oman. That was fixed at an additional fee. The software is good for us, since we are not such a huge amusement center. I am not for large venues."* Avik Kumar, Funtopia Barka, Oman

*"As a manager of 2 FECs I can say GymRealm is 80% good for us. If I was a climbing gym operator it would be great. Recently the support is lacking, but I have researched alternatives and GymRealm is far better solution for us."* Yassen Nikolov, Funtopia Glenview, IL, USA

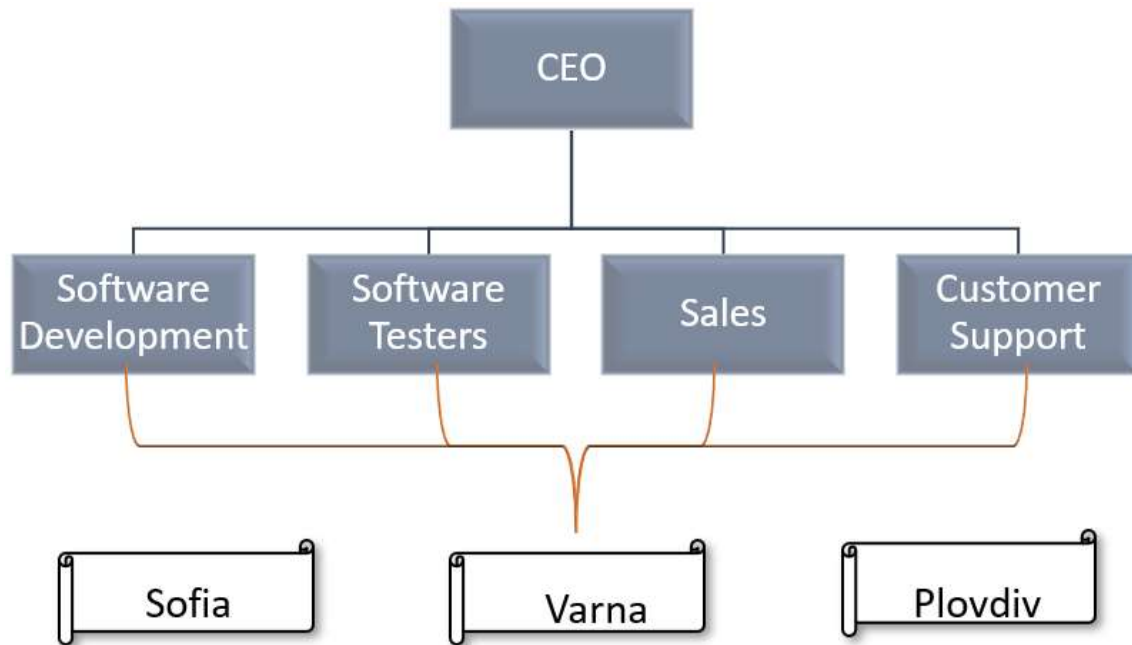
*"I work with GymRealm software for 10 years already and I'm used to it, but there are many settings and functionalities a manager should know. There is a space for improvement, fortunately the support in Bulgaria is prompt."* Desislava Borisova, Climb Academy, Sofia, Bulgaria

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### **The GymRealm Family**

GymRealm had 15 employees spread in the three biggest Bulgarian cities – Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna. Some of the team members joined the company soon after it was established, forming a solid core of experience and knowledge. The company had four departments - Software Development, Software Testing, Sales and Customer Support. The organizational chart and personnel distribution by department can be found in Exhibit 6. The employees had regular online meetings, were in constant contact with each other and usually met in person once a year around Christmas. In addition, the CEO visited all three offices every 2 months to connect with the staff. Accounting and HR management were outsourced services and there was no administrative unit in the company.

Exhibit 6. GymRealm's Organizational Chart

**Number of employees per department:****Software Development – 6****Sales – 3****Software Testers – 3****Customer Support - 2**

All departments had their specific functions, and they were all directly subordinated to the CEO Dimitar Georgiev. Dimitar is young and energetic. He worked as a senior developer in addition to his duties as a CEO. As a result, he managed to earn his employees' respect, some of whom said that they *"... admire him because we see how much he's achieved and doesn't stop – managing the team, developing the product, speaking with clients and closing deals. Approaching the largest producer of climbing walls in the world is a big honor and we are proud to be part of all this"*.

In addition to his duties at GymRealm, Dimitar was recently given the opportunity to manage another much larger software company and reveal his full potential.

GymRealm maintained a dynamic environment and as a result very often the roles of the different departments intersected. It was not exceptional for some employees to perform more



than one function. This was exactly the case with Nikolay Simeonov, an experienced sales agent who started working for the company more than 10 years ago. Nikolay described his duties as *“80% support, 20% sales and collecting due payments from clients in between.”* Sometimes employees were involved simultaneously in software development, after-sales support and even direct sales. Another employee, Victor Stanoev, started as a sales agent in 2013 but ended up as a software developer. Victor noted, *“When I started with sales 12 years ago, I also became the contact person for my clients to support them with the software if there was a problem. So, this is how I got excited about programming and started studying so I could also understand the product from the inside. And in the end, I did not become software developer only, but customer support as well. That’s why I’m a universal soldier, because I fulfill 3 out of 4 functions in the company.”*

Dimitar believed that the dividing line between sales and support could get blurred as the clients sometimes preferred to speak with the sales representatives; the ones they already knew. Therefore, it was not always possible to determine who should take care of a certain matters. For example, when a client asked questions about a specific new feature of the software, should that be answered by sales or support? In addition, Dimitar considered it to be an advantage that clients contacted the sales department; when they did, the sales force had the opportunity to sell some new additional feature or function.

### Entrepreneurial Mindset

The success of GymRealm was to a great extent the result of the flexibility of the company and the team’s ability to think outside the box. GymRealm did not adhere strictly to formal rules, but instead relied on thinking creatively, taking risks, and establishing a company culture where everybody was free to share ideas. *“We have very open communication. Everyone expresses freely what they think. I don’t monitor them closely. I don’t track when the staff come to work or when they leave,”* explained Dimitar. At one point, the employees took a survey measuring the degree of entrepreneurship of the company culture. GymRealm outperformed most for-profit



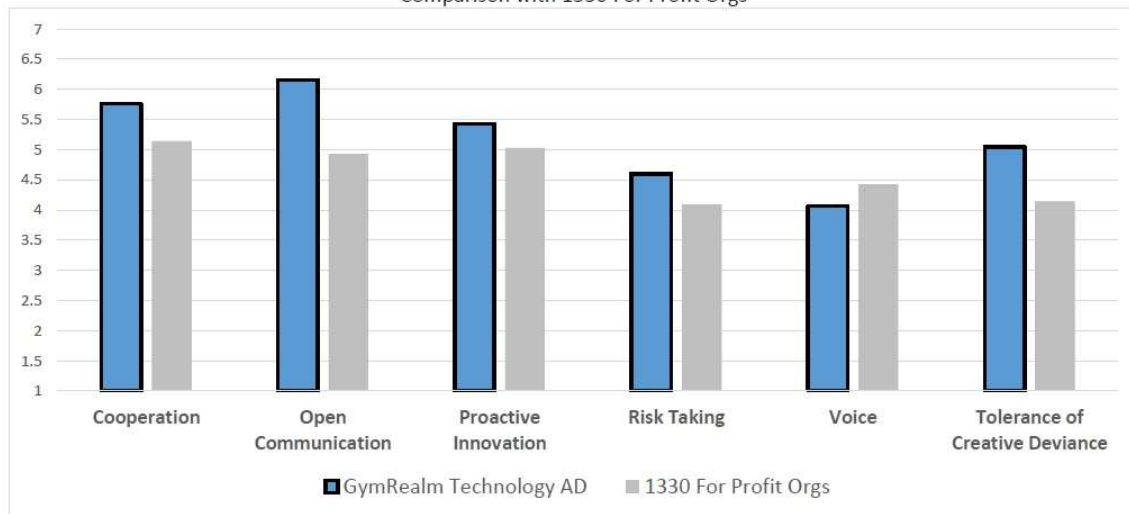
companies, as well as most IT industry companies in the database when it came to Tolerance of Creative Deviance, Proactive Innovation and Cooperation. The results of the survey can be found in Exhibit 7.

**Exhibit 7. Excerpt from A Survey Assessing Entrepreneurial Organizational Culture**

Source: McGuire, S., E. Drost & Y. Zhang. "Convergent and Discriminant Validity of a Model of Entrepreneurial Culture," *Proceedings of the XXVII ISPIM Innovation Conference, Oporto, Portugal, June 19-22, 2016.*

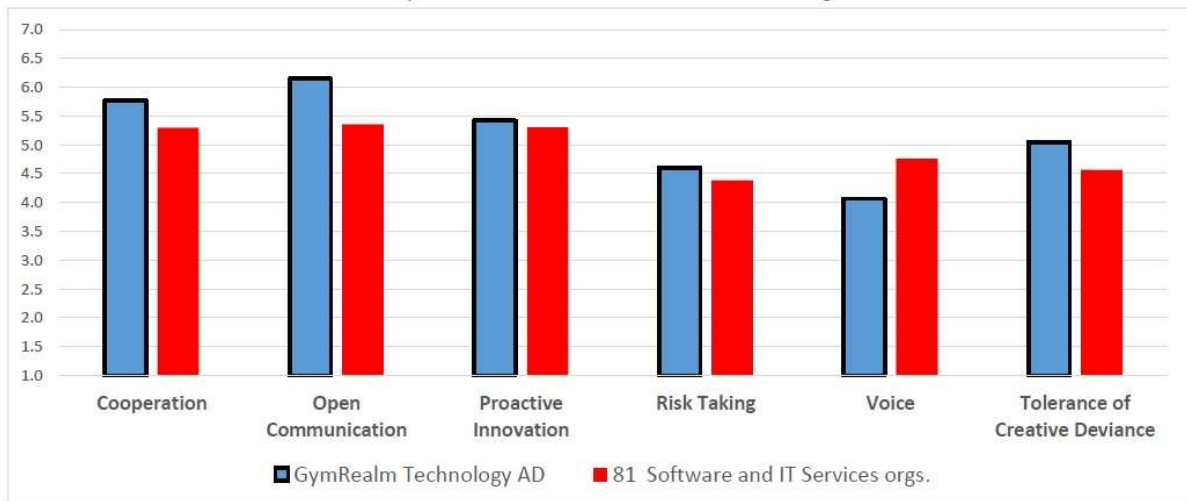
**Entrepreneurial Organizational Culture: GymRealm Technology AD**

Comparison with 1330 For Profit Orgs



**Entrepreneurial Organizational Culture: GymRealm Technology AD**

Comparison with 81 Software and IT Services orgs.



Thinking and acting fast was a virtue in the competitive software industry. Dimitar Georgiev rejected the idea of formal hierarchies. One of the employees noted, *“Dimitar doesn’t like these ideas about positions - manager of this, manager of that. Everything is decided by him, right away. This, on the other hand, is positive for a small company such as ours, because the decisions are made quickly. We don’t have to wait for considerations and approvals and discussions, he decides, and we act now.”*

As Dimitar also took the position of the main (senior) developer in the company, most of the ideas came from him. He knew what tasks there were to be done, when, and how. The employees spoke directly with him and acted on his feedback.

Dimitar believed that a successful business should always be one step ahead of its competitors. Therefore, the employees invested effort in creating and launching their products in an operational environment as soon as possible, even if it meant that later they might need to spend time fixing bugs and providing support to clients. This whole idea was also expressed by the members of the GymRealm team who claimed that *“sometimes we’re thrown into the deep waters, and we need to swim – preferably fast.”*

GymRealm had a core of experienced employees, but because of its expansion new recruits were welcome as well. All employees were provided with a lot of information and materials so that they could get to know and understand the products of the company as well as possible. Dimitar started his journey in entrepreneurship at a young age, and he knew how adaptive one needed to be to succeed. There was no HR department within the company and no mentorship program; newcomers had to put in the work if they wanted to prove that they belonged. Just like the more experienced employees, the new ones were often *“thrown into the deep.”*



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***Journal of Case Research and Inquiry***

Peer-Reviewed Cases, Notes and Articles

A publication of the Western Casewriters Association

Vol. 9  
April 2024

ISSN 2377-7389