

# **SSA Paper**

**2025**

BUDAPEST BUSINESS UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF COMMERCE, HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM (FCHT)

**A DIGITÁLIS FITNESZ ÉS JÓLÉTI PIAC KERESLETE ÉS  
INNOVÁCIÓJA MAGYARORSZÁGON**

**DEMAND AND INNOVATION IN HUNGARY'S DIGITAL FITNESS  
AND WELL-BEING MARKET**

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Date of closing the manuscript: 2024, November, 4

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Digital Fitness and Well-being Market has grown significantly due to the increased popularity of fitness, well-being awareness, and technological advancements. Macroeconomic factors and global trends provide ideal circumstances for innovation and for developing advanced methods for software-related services. The Health and Wellness Coaching applications have become widely used by individuals ranging from average users to professional athletes, each aiming to improve their health and performance. Several hypotheses were formed regarding digital fitness trends and unsatisfied user needs, including their potential solutions.

According to personal observation, numerous user pain points and competitor deficiencies were identified, generating potential market gaps. The study aims to validate the market viability of a theoretical, innovative, multifunctional fitness application that covers professional needs, specifically assessing demand in Hungary. Based on the primary research findings with a deductive approach, several Unique Selling Points (USP) were identified. The study aims to use an inductive approach to reevaluate the previous findings, test the hypotheses related to the USPs, user needs, and market conditions, and collect as much relevant data as possible to support the service development.

Due to the increased demand, the supply of digital fitness and well-being services is causing saturated market conditions and, in parallel, providing new opportunities for innovation. The research aims to represent the theoretical framework of the proposed innovative digital fitness service. It provides up-to-date data about the market size and macro- and micro-environmental factors, including market trends and competitors. The target audience analysis covers both demographic and psychographic characteristics. The study aims to approach the objectives using diverse models and methodologies like the Hooked Model, the Lean Startup, and the Technology Acceptance Model.

The research questions relate to the abovementioned objectives:

1. How does the inductive approach modify the previous findings?
2. Are the formulated hypotheses valid concerning the USPs, user needs, and market conditions?
3. What factors can improve the Digital Fitness and Well-being services?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Overview of Digital Fitness and Well-being Market**

The increased popularity of fitness, well-being awareness, and technological advancements are the bases for innovation and developing advanced software-related services. Users are seeking convenient and personalized solutions to enhance their fitness activities, which generates increasing demand in the market (statista, 2024).

The Digital Fitness & Well-Being market includes Fitness trackers and Health & Wellness coaching markets. The Fitness tracker market includes devices for fitness and motion tracking, like smart bands, smartwatches, and smart scales. The Health and Wellness Coaching Market includes Fitness, Meditation, and Nutrition apps. This research focuses on the Health and Wellness coaching category, Fitness and Nutrition segments. The apps can be segmented by these platforms: Android, IOS, and others (statista, 2024).

Research suggests that progressive overload, appropriate diet, and regeneration are essential to gain progress in sports (Kellmann et al., 2018, p. 241). Working out and dieting also requires correct planning and logging; this provides the base of the Health and Wellness coaching applications. Depending on personal factors, diverse solutions are in use, for the planning and logging process. These solutions include paper-pen-based methods, fitness apps, other software solutions, or a mixture of them.

### **2.2 Previous research findings and hypotheses**

My experience as a fitness athlete, linked with dissatisfaction with Health and wellness coaching applications, triggered me to formulate hypotheses about the need for an innovative multifunctional fitness app. Applying the deductive approach and identifying the problems established the premises for the hypotheses. The realized problems were that diet planning with paper-pen-based methods or with Office programs is time-consuming, while the applications mainly focus on flexible dieting and do not provide transparent solutions. The planning and logging process is not accessible on a single platform, while these factors strongly correlate. The available fitness apps lacked features required by professional athletes, like detailed planning tools that meet advanced needs.

The qualitative data collection began in 2022 as covert observations. This anecdotal evidence was the basis of the formulated hypothesis, which has been further tested using a deductive approach, utilizing both primary and secondary data. The primary research includes

a questionnaire, while the secondary research analyzes the macro and microenvironment-related factors. The outcomes of the primary data collection will be presented in this research, completed with up-to-date secondary data.

Based on these problems, the following hypotheses were formed:

1. There is a demand for an application that includes transparent diet planning.
2. There is a demand for an application that integrates workout and nutrition-related functions, providing workout planning and logging, as well as diet planning and logging.
3. There is a demand for an application that provides a platform meeting professional standards regarding progress tracking and data inputs.
4. The functionalities offered by the described application represent USPs, it is a valid market gap.
5. The Hungarian market presents ideal market conditions for launching the described application.

The questionnaire sample includes Hungarian athletes and fitness enthusiasts. It aims to validate the hypotheses, explicitly focusing on the app's functionalities and professional-grade features. An inductive, exploratory approach will be used to complete the analysis using interviews to create a more complex and reliable validation. The primary research findings, including the interviews and questionnaire, will be integrated into the study's relevant sections.

## **2.3 Proposed Solution Overview**

To address the hypotheses, the proposed solution is a Multifunctional Health and Wellness Coaching application that fulfils professional needs. The USPs are the transparent diet planning, the multifunctional platform and the advanced functionalities. Due to extreme uncertainty and innovative features, it qualifies as a startup. In this study, this startup will be referred to as “MHW-App” which stands for Multifunctional Health and Wellness Application.

## **3. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Descriptive presentation of the models**

Technology Acceptance Model: the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was proposed by Fred D. Davis in 1989 and has been used to explain and predict individual technology acceptance or rejection. The model identifies two key factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness is “the degree to which an individual believes that

using a particular system would enhance his job performance” (Davis, 1989, p.320). The perceived ease of use refers to - “the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would be free from effort” (Davis, 1989, p.320). Based on TAM, these two determine end users’ behavioral intentions to use technology and their actual usage behavior (Pobee, 2021, p. 39). By utilizing the Technology Acceptance Model, the study aims to present how the perceived usefulness and ease of use theoretically influence the MHW-App.

**Lean Startup:** the Lean Startup methodology formulated by Eric Ries (2011) introduces a systematic approach for entrepreneurs that offers solutions to minimize resource waste. The iterative approach containing three phases is in the center: Build-Measure-Learn.

1. **Build:** The core concept of this phase is to reduce the used resources by creating a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). This basic version of the product offers only just the essential functions.
2. **Measure:** After the development of MVP, the data gathering starts, using methods like A/B testing or cohort analysis.
3. **Learn:** This phase highlights the validated learning based on the data collection. At the learning phase, two directions are available: whether to pivot (make fundamental change) or preserve (continue improving the product).

By utilizing the Lean Startup methodology, the market validation of the MHW-App can be significantly more effective (Ries, 2019).

**Hooked Model:** the Hooked Model, introduced by Nir Eyal (2014), provides a framework by which companies can integrate user habits into their services, ensuring long-term commitment. The hook model shows how habit-forming products connect users' problems with the manufacturer's solutions often enough to form a habit, thereby increasing product loyalty and user satisfaction. Businesses that affect customer habits gain a significant advantage over their competitors. The Hooked Model is a four-phase process that helps build user habits. The four phases:

1. **Trigger:** external or internal factors that trigger the user to take action.
2. **Action:** refers to the simplest behavior a user performs in the hope of reward.
3. **Variable reward:** provides unpredictable, different types of rewards to keep users engaged and motivated, making them more likely to return.
4. **Investment:** In this phase, users invest resources into the product. The more they invest, the more likely they will use the product further (Eyal, 2019).

The MHW-App can build habit-forming engagement by utilizing the hook model, improving the Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV).

The Hooked Model and the Lean Startup Methodology and their implementation will be presented in Chapter 9, while the Technology Acceptance Model will be integrated into the study's relevant sections.

### **3.2 Methodology and data collection methods**

The data-gathering process started in November 2023 and ended in October 2024, with the use of a questionnaire aiming to validate the hypotheses. After this quantitative data collection to get up-to-date market understanding, qualitative data, the inductive approach started.

The interview participants were divided into two main categories: average users and trainers with different backgrounds. Five experienced athletes and five trainers were interviewed to collect sufficient data. All individuals had experience in fitness activities, and some had a competitive background. The trainers work with a diverse clientele, which provides more comprehensive answers. The questionnaire participants were selected based on their regular fitness activities and conscious diet planning/journaling. The questionnaire population consisted of 179 participants from different demographic backgrounds.

## **4. MARKET SIZE**

The top-down analysis is being used to evaluate the market size for the MHW-App, focusing on the Hungarian market. The market size serves as a benchmark to evaluate the market viability in Hungary, including financial planning. From a research perspective, this study focuses on calculating market size as a preliminary benchmark to assess market viability and guide financial planning within the Hungarian market.

### **a) Total Available Market**

The Total Available Market (TAM) is the total potential user base in Hungary for Health and Wellness coaching application, representing all possible users interested in digital fitness solutions. The estimated user penetration rate for Health and Wellness coaching applications in 2024 is 24,83% (statista, 2024), while the Total Population of Hungary is approximately 9,6 million (KSH, 2024).

TAM Calculation:  $TAM = Population \times Penetration Rate$

1. Substituting the values:  $TAM = 9\,600\,000 \times 0,2483 = 2\,383\,680$  potential users

The TAM consists approximately 2 383 680 users in Hungary.

### **b) Serviceable Available Market**

The SAM is a subset of the TAM, representing users who are likely to use direct competitors, like YAZIO. To determine the penetration rate, an analysis of key players was conducted, selecting the direct competitors, taking its average the following values are available: YAZIO Fasting & Food Tracker: 11%, Fitify: 18%. Using this sample, an average was then extrapolated to cover additional competitor influence, resulting in a Total Competitor Market Penetration Rate of 34.5% (statista.com, 2024).

SAM Calculation:  $SAM = Population \times Competitor\ Penetration\ Rate$

2. Substituting the values:  $SAM = 2\ 383\ 680 \times 0,345 = 822\ 370$  potential users

The SAM consists of approximately 822 370 users in Hungary.

### **c) Serviceable Obtainable Market**

The Serviceable Obtainable Market (SOM) represents the achievable subset of SAM that a startup could realistically capture, assuming a certain market share. For this estimation, a 5% market share within the SAM was calculated.

SOM Calculation:  $SOM = SAM \times Market\ Share$

3. Substituting the values:  $SOM = 822\ 370 \times 0,05 = 41\ 119$  potential users

The SOM consists of approximately 41 119 users in Hungary.

## **5. MACROENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS**

This chapter examines the macro-environment of the MHW-App, evaluating the major external forces that affect the MHV-app decision-making process, including the market trends, and economic and technological factors focusing on the Hungarian market. It is operationalized qualitatively and quantitatively. The methodology consists of primary and secondary data.

### **5.1 Market trends**

This section is based on the researcher's personal experience, observation, and collected secondary data. It aims to present ongoing market trends. The analysis supports the market viability of the MHW-App through the potential integration of the mentioned elements.

The Digital Fitness and Well-being Market is experiencing significant growth due to customers' increasing preference for fitness and wellness activities. The global Fitness

Application Market is projected to reach US\$6.86bn in 2024, showing an annual growth rate (CAGR 2024-2029) of 7.96%, resulting in a projected market volume of US\$10.06bn by 2029. Between 2020 and 2029, significant growth can be expected across all revenue sectors; the smartwatch segment is set to perform strongest, with estimated growth figures of US \$40.57 billion by 2029. The smart band market is projected to reach an estimated USD 11.03 billion by 2029, while the smart scale market is anticipated to grow to USD 5.21 billion (statista.com, 2024). Users are looking for convenient and personalized ways to stay fit and healthy. They are turning to Health and Wellness coaching apps as convenient solutions to track and plan their workouts and diet, set goals, and measure their progress. The ability to access workout and nutrition plans anytime, anywhere, is a crucial factor driving the popularity of fitness apps. Cloud-based platforms, artificial intelligence, gamification, and wearable compatibility act as technologically boosting factors in user engagement and customization (statista.com, 2024). Diverse factors drive the growth of the fitness app market in different countries. For instance, nations with high smartphone penetration rates, like the United States and China, provide a broad customer base for these apps. Similarly, in countries with a well-established fitness culture, such as Australia and Sweden, there is significant demand for apps offering diverse workout options and comprehensive diet-related digital solutions. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of fitness apps because users tried alternative ways to stay active while fitness centers were closed (statista.com, 2024).

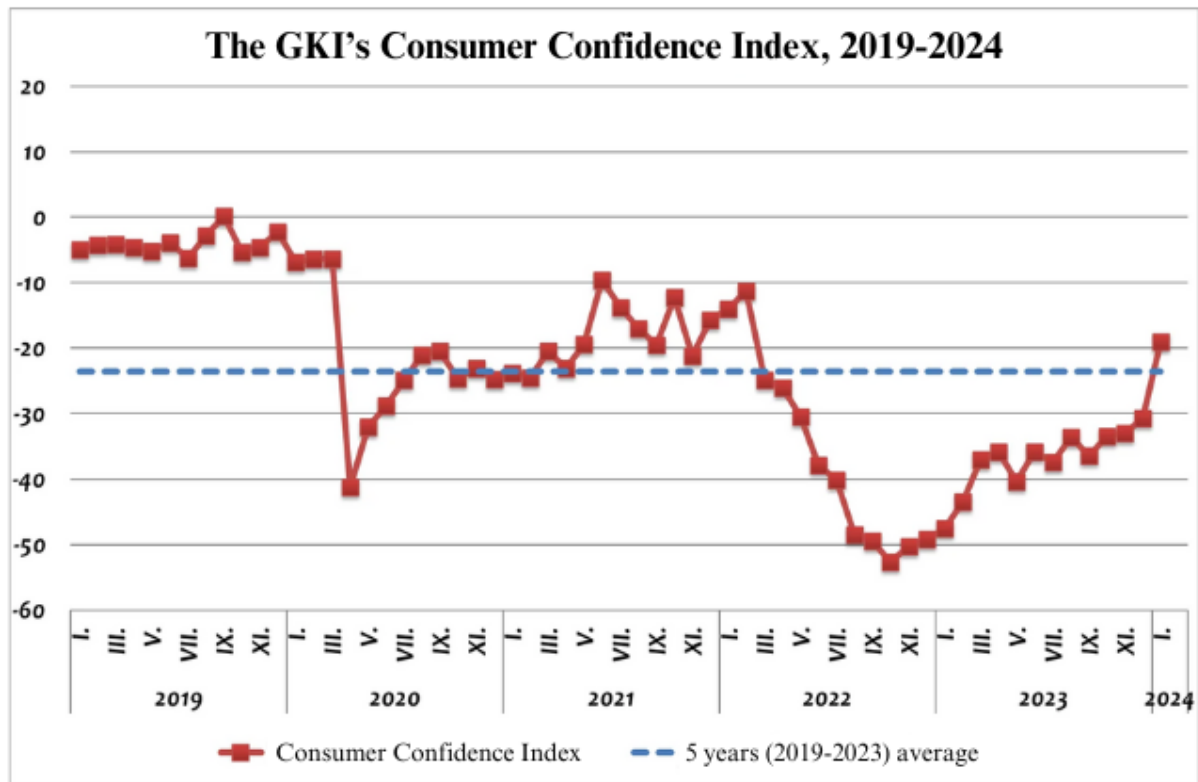
The Trend Analysis validates the substantial demand within the Digital Fitness and Well-being Market, which supports the viability of the MHW-App. By integrating or predicting these trends, the services can maintain their ability to complete or gain a competitive advantage in the market.

## **5.2 Economic Factors**

Hungary's fitness app penetration rate closely follows the European average; both regions are projected to reach around 30-32% in 2029. Although the improving penetration rate, Hungary's average revenue per user (ARPU) is significantly below the European average. While Europe's ARPU is around 17,71\$, the Hungarian's is around 11,72. This revenue gap is projected to grow further from 2024 to 2029 (statista.com, 2024).

The GKI Consumer Confidence Index shows consumer confidence in Hungary around -10 to 0 until early 2020. A steep drop in 2020 reflects the COVID-19 pandemic shock. After moderate recovery, the significant decline represents geopolitical issues and inflation. By early

2024, consumer confidence is strongly increasing, overreaching the five-year average, signalling renewed consumer optimism (GKI, 2024). The rising consumer confidence indicated suggests a potential increase in consumer spending and receptiveness to new technologies, presenting a favorable environment for launching and expanding the MHW-App in the market.



**Figure 1: GKI Consumer Confidence Index, 2019-2024 (GKI, 2024)**

In 2023, Hungary's startup ecosystem faced a stormy period, with investments dropping over 60% from €180 million to €65 million, reflecting similar declines across Europe. The reduction in large funding rounds, primarily due to challenging macroeconomic conditions, significantly impacted growth-stage companies, leading many established startups to prioritize efficiency. Early-stage fundraising also saw changes, as many government and EU programs ended. However, there was still growth in pre-seed and seed startups securing funding from local and international investors under conditions that align more closely with global standards (startuphungary.com, 2023).

With shrinking investment and the loss of government support, the MHW-App faces critical scaling constraints, forcing it to adopt cost-cutting actions that may damage its competitive edge and long-term growth.

### **5.3 Technological Factors**

Although health awareness is increasing, some user groups are hesitant to adopt digital fitness solutions, often due to their complexity and limited perceived usefulness. Some users feel these apps lack added value and fail to meet personal needs. According to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), perceived usefulness and ease of use are critical determinants of technology adoption. When users perceive these apps as complex or not directly beneficial to their health goals, adoption rates tend to slow, especially among more cautious segments (Keller, Ercsey, & Kovácsné Tóth, 2023).

## **6. MICROENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS**

This chapter examines the microenvironment of the theoretic MHW-App, by utilizing SWOT analysis. The basis for the analysis is provided by the competitor analysis, the examination of market trends. The unit of analysis is the fitness applications, individuals (users), firms (fitness related services). It is operationalized qualitatively and quantitatively. The methodology consists of primary and secondary data.

### **6.1 Competitor Analysis**

#### **6.1.1 Introduction**

The goal of the competitor analysis is to explore the competitive landscape of the Digital Fitness and Well-being market, focusing on fitness applications and their substitute services. The approach starts with identifying the most competitive services, using both primary and secondary data. Next, the focus shifts to analyzing the potential overlap for in-depth analysis. The direct competitors are applications and digital services offering similar solutions to the same target audience. By category, these are workout, nutrition-related, and multifunctional apps. The indirect competitors are tools and services that can substitute the MHW-App. By category, these are software tools (e.g., Excel, digital notes) or paper-pen-based methods.

The leading mobile app globally in the fitness and sports category was MyFitnessPal, which earned over 12 million U.S. dollars. Strava came second, generating approximately 5.68 million U.S. dollars through Google Play and Apple App Store. Peloton followed closely, generating around 5 million U.S. dollars. Fitbit, which specializes in popular wearable fitness and health tracking devices, generated 4.18 million U.S. dollars through its leading brand and an additional 4.12 million U.S. dollars from its app powered by Google (statista.com, 2024).

In Hungary, according to Statista, the key market players in the field of fitness and exercise are Strava (19%), Fitify (18%), Muscle Booster Workout Planner (4%), Home Fitness for Weight Loss (2%), Home Workout (2%), Running Walking Tracker Goals (2%). In the field of Nutrition: YAZIO Fasting & Food Tracker (11%). In Meditation and Mindfulness: Calm (11%), Headspace (2%). In the area of Yoga: Daily Yoga (10%). Moreover, the others consist of 19%. (statista.com, 2024) From this list, the direct competitors for the MHW-App are YAZIO and Fitify.

According to the questionnaire findings, with 56 responses, the leading app is YAZIO (15%), the second is MyFitnessPal (11%), and the third is Samsung Health (3%). The NOEX, Strong, Kalóriabázis, and Six Pack In 30 Days reached 2%, while Fifty and Hevy reached only 1%. From this list, the new direct competitors for the MHW-App are Myfitnesspal, NOEX, Strong, Kalóriabázis and Hevy. The interview findings support the mentioned leading applications positions, which are YAZIO, MyFitnessPal, and NOEX app.

Based on the questionnaire findings, with 134 responses, around 36% of the respondents use paper-pen-based methods, around 16% use office programs, and around 3% use phone notes to track and plan as indirect competitors.

For the interviews inductive approach was used, providing qualitative data. The in-depth interviews with experienced sportspersons and trainers revealed that the target audience mainly uses office programs like Excel to plan or note their workouts or diets. In relation to applications, the most popular services were Yazio and MyFitnessPal. Most of the interviewees could not answer why they do not use applications, or they answered that they have not found one that is suited for them.

### **6.1.2 In-depth Analysis**

YAZIO Fasting & Food Tracker: based on secondary and primary data, YAZIO Fasting & Food Tracker is the leading direct competitor app in the field of nutrition. It provides diverse features, including diet management, nutritional insights, progress tracking, mood and activity monitoring, personalized coaching, hydration tracking, and recipe management. It is focusing on flexible dieting and intermittent fasting. The app utilizes a freemium model and has recently incorporated advertisements too. It offers an excellent price-value ratio, frequently providing relevant discounts. It has advanced UX design and an outstanding food database. YAZIO supports 20 languages, and it has over 95 million users. It is accessible in more than 150

countries. However, some weaknesses include frequent annoying advertisements (based on interviews and observation) and limited planning options.

Founded in 2014, YAZIO is headquartered in Erfurt, Germany, and has over 95 employees. The app is regularly updated, with multiple updates released each month (yazio.com, 2024).

**MyFitnessPal Calorie Counter:** MyFitnessPal is the leading fitness application globally but is less prevalent in Hungary, potentially because of its limited language support. Like Yazio, it is focused on flexible dieting, compared with a limited workout segment. It operates on a freemium model with a typical value-price ratio at the market. Its strengths include an expansive food database, significant resources, and a first-mover advantage. However, its UX design can be confusing and has limited language and planning options. Founded in 2005 and headquartered in the USA, the app receives regular updates and multiple releases each month (myfitnesspal.com, 2024).

**MacroFactor:** while MacroFactor is not the leading competitor yet, it is outstanding from the competitor list, based on customer feedback and personal usability tests. The service is a science-driven nutrition-related application with a built-in diet coach, including progress tracking. It uses a subscribed-based model with a free trial period. It is the most expensive application compared to the other most relevant competitors, parallelly it is the most premium, advanced application. It has a comprehensive database and, by far, outstanding UX/UI. It manages continuous and relevant updates. It adapts to your metabolism continuously and is customizable while using AI. The disadvantages of using this service are its expenses and lack of comprehensive diet planning. It was founded in 2020 and is headquartered in the USA (macrofactorapp.com, 2024).

**Strong Workout Tracker:** the Strong app, based on the Forbes evaluation, (forbes.com, 2024) and user feedback, is one of the most influential and easy-to-use workout tracker applications. It provides workout and progress-tracking functions. It is suitable to schedule and log workouts and to measure progress. It uses a freemium model with an excellent price-value ratio. Its strengths are the UX design and the animations about exercises. Its weaknesses are the lack of customizability and the lack of regular updates. It was founded in 2015 and is headquartered in the United Kingdom (strong.app, 2024).

**Hevy Workout Tracker:** the Hevy app is an intuitive workout and progress-tracking application. It is suitable for scheduling and logging workouts and measuring progress; with social features, it is more likely to reduce the churn rate of the customers. It uses a freemium model and has an excellent price-value ratio. It is cheaper than strong, but provides more options for analytics, while the updates are frequent. It has social features and provides

animations about exercises. Its weaknesses are the lack of customizability and proper diet planning. It was founded in 2019 and is headquartered in the USA (hevyapp.com, 2024).

**NOEX: Training Platform:** NOEX is a comprehensive Hungarian fitness service that provides workout programs, advice, and recipes. It monetizes through subscription packages, ranging from average market prices to high prices. Its strengths are the UX and UI design, social features, animations about exercises, and customer support. It is updated regularly. Its weakness is the lack of customizability. It was founded in 2021 and is headquartered in Hungary (noextraining.com, 2024).

## **6.2 SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT analysis is a strategic planning technique that identifies core strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It's a fact-based analysis that collects information from both internal and external sources. This analysis aims to summarize the research findings about the market size, market trends, and competitors, presenting the microenvironment of the MHW-App. Its findings also support the development-related fields, including innovation. The scope of the analysis includes the competitors, market trends, device integration, and macroeconomic factors. Both primary and secondary data are used for the evaluation. The expected outcomes include identifying unique opportunities for differentiation and potential weaknesses to address in the app design.

### **a) Strengths**

**Unique Selling Points:** the MHW-App's main strengths are its Unique Selling Points, such as diet planning that can substitute office programs, multifunctional solutions that integrate nutrition and workout-related functions, and customizable, transparent, professional tools. Based on secondary and primary data, there is no evidence of a Health and Wellness coaching application that is present in the market or used by a noticeable number of users that provides these features. This potential unique presence in the market offers strengths for the service.

**Market Positioning:** The MHW-App is positioned as a science-based, all-in-one Health and Wellness coaching service that, in theory, has the potential to capture a niche in the Digital Fitness and Well-being market by targeting and satisfying the needs of both average users and professional athletes. Its focus on multifunctionality strengthens its presence in the market as a premium choice.

**Innovation:** the incorporation of the USPs and their introduction to the market present an advantage compared to competitors who do not update regularly and do not focus on innovation, like Strong App.

**Monetization:** by avoiding disturbing ads and utilizing a freemium model with market-average fees, while the app provides an all-in-one solution, the service can be more beneficial than those competitors who use other business models or only focus on one area.

## **b) Weaknesses**

**Resource Constraints:** given the limited funding available in the Hungarian market, the MHW-App may face rapid scaling or new feature development challenges (Startup Hungary, 2023). The most severe weakness can be competing with the market leaders as a new participant with limited resources.

**Limited Demand:** the planning process requires knowledge about the related field, and it must be important enough for the user to put in the effort. Due to its very specific target audience, the MHW-App may lack demand.

**User Commitment:** the use of the service requires relevant motivation due to its professional grades, which require extra effort and discipline.

**Complex design:** due to its multifunctional, professional grades, the app's navigation is not as easy as that of simple apps like YAZIO.

## **c) Opportunities**

**Hooked Model:** consistent exercise and diet logging are creating the base for the integration of the Hooked Model. By utilizing the Model, the service can improve the CLTV while decreasing the churn rate (Eyal, 2019).

**Lean Methodology:** by utilizing the Lean Startup approach, the service can avoid significant resource waste while getting immediate market feedback about the MVP (Ries, 2011).

**Wearable integration:** The increasing popularity of wearable devices provides new opportunities for integration, such as workout tracking with smartwatches or sending fitness-related notifications.

**Artificial Intelligence:** the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can enhance personalization by providing tailored solutions or recommendations. It can provide predictive insights based on user data. AI-driven features can increase engagement, improve user satisfaction, and strengthen the app's position like MacroFactor.

#### **d) Threats**

**Intense Competition:** The competition level increased parallelly due to the increased demand for Digital Fitness and Well-being solutions. Standing out in this competitive landscape, with limited resources, is a significant threat.

**User Adoption Challenges:** According to the Technology Acceptance Model, user adoption depends on perceived usefulness and ease of use. Adopting rates may suffer if potential users find the app complex or do not perceive clear benefits compared to existing solutions. This is especially relevant in Hungary, where some consumers hesitate to adopt new digital fitness solutions. Overcoming this barrier will require focused efforts on user education and demonstrating actual value.

### **7. TARGET AUDIENCE ANALYSIS**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

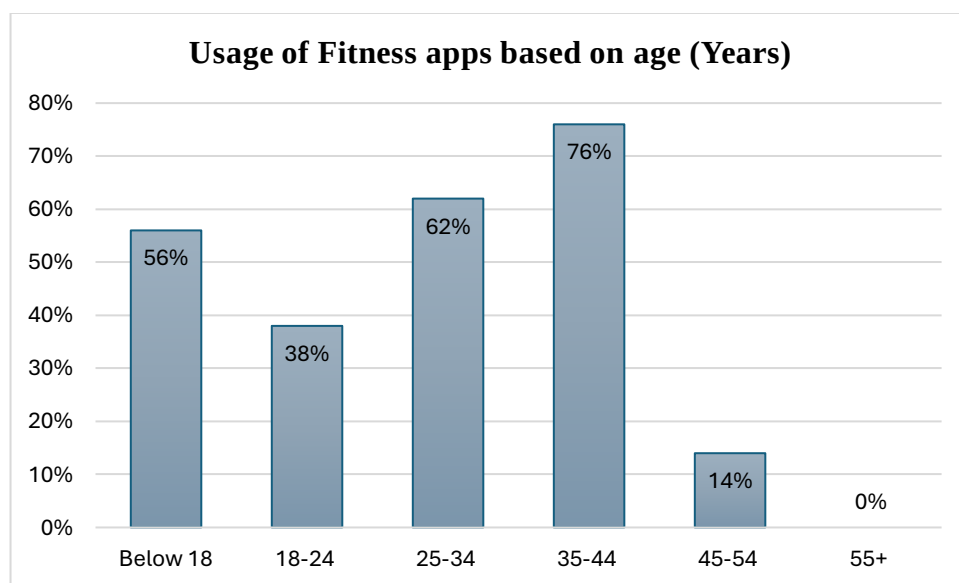
The Target Audience Analysis assesses ideal customers with a research-driven practice. It analyzes the demographic and psychographic characteristics. The target audience represents the user group that is most likely to be receptive to messaging the MHW-App. This analysis aims to understand the potential customer base as detailed as possible. Its findings support the development-related fields and are crucial for marketing. The scope of the analysis includes identifying demographic factors (like age, gender, and income), and psychographic factors (like interests, values, and lifestyle). Both primary and secondary data are used for the evaluation. The unit of analysis is individual user characteristics and behavior. The methodology includes a combination of demographic profiling and psychographic segmentation using the Technology Acceptance Model. The target audience for the MHW-App is those who are actively participating in gym activities, committed to a fitness lifestyle, and prioritize maintaining their health. Although due to its professional, comprehensive grades, the main target audience consists of athletes dedicated to bodybuilding and regular workouts, such as athletes and bodybuilders.

#### **7.2 Demographic Characteristics**

The demographic analysis aims to understand the following factors: age, gender, occupation, and education.

**Age:** the analysis is based on data collected from 175 respondents with diverse age groups: below 18 years (27 respondents), 18-24 years (66 respondents), 25-34 years (45

respondents), 35-44 years (21 respondents), 45-54 years (14 respondents). 55+ years (2 respondents). The outcome for those aged 55+ is not representative due to its small population size. The objective is to understand the purchasing power by age segments. The survey asked, "How much would you be willing to pay for a comprehensive fitness app that includes workout and diet planning, tracking, and progress monitoring?" This question aims to gain insights into age-based preferences for app pricing and explore cost-sensitive segments; in contrast, it does not aim to get exact feedback about MHW-App potential usage rate. Based on the questionnaire findings, the age group 25-34 seems to be the most open-minded to using fitness apps, with an average usage rate of 76%, followed by the age group below 18 (56%) and the 25-34 group (62%). The age group 25-34 and 35-44 present the most significant purchasing power, followed by the age group 18-24; the age group 45-54 presents positive results too. The category below 18 does not present purchasing power; 64% would not pay for the service, even if they showed high interest.



**Figure 2: Usage of Fitness apps based on age**

Gender: the analysis is based on data collected from 175 respondents, including 70 women and 105 men. The outcome for those aged 55+ is not representative due to its small population size. The objective is to understand the differences in application usage between genders. There seem to be no significant differences in fitness application usage between genders, with a close ratio of 22 men to 19 women. However, the purchasing power appears to be slightly stronger among men.

Occupation: based on interview and questionnaire findings, the students do not present purchasing power, while the other categories significantly present better results. Due to their knowledge and experience, trainers can be the main target audience concerning the occupation. The interview findings showed that people in intellectual leadership positions use more applications and complex software to manage their fitness journey.

Education: as educational and income levels improve, the proportion of people who engage in conscious physical activity to protect their health increases (KSH, 2019). The use rate of fitness applications is more prominent among those with a high school diploma or higher education degree (Keller, Ercsey, & Kovácsné Tóth, 2023).

### **7.3 Psychographic Characteristics**

The psychographic analysis aims to understand the following factors: user values, attitudes, lifestyle, motivation, personality traits, interests, challenges, and user pain points. The Technology Acceptance Model will evaluate the user's acceptance of Health and Wellness Coaching applications, examining factors influencing their perceived ease of use and usefulness.

Personality Traits and Motivation: Based on my experience as a competitive fitness athlete and my observations at the IFBB (International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness), four primary personas can be highlighted as users of Health and Wellness Coaching applications. Each experience and knowledge level consists of general behaviors, which is why these personas are based on the individuals' experience level and attitudes. These personas are the “Rookie Lifters”, “Balanced Lifters”, “Fanatic Lifters”, and “Health Guardians”.

Beginners or “Rookie Lifters”: they are new participants in the Health and Well-being market, who want immediate results and usually they are driven by motivation. They lack knowledge, that’s why they prefer easy-to-use, personal trainer substituting digital services, like “six pack in 30 days” app. Due to the motivation driven approach, the willingness to pay for these services is present, but with a lower CLTV.

Intermediates or “Balanced Lifters”: they are experienced participants in the Health and Well-being market, who are committed with their fitness journey but keeping balance with personal life. They usually driven by discipline but sometimes they “cheat” during their fitness journey. They use apps like YAZIO or Hevy to gain progress.

Professionals or “Fanatic Lifters”: they are advanced fitness enthusiasts or semi-professional athletes. They are seeking to achieve their personal best. They prefer highly customizable features, so they mainly prefer office programs for tracking and planning. They

confront the risk of burnout or injury due to their intense routines and high expectations. They have a higher CLTV and are willing to pay for those services, which can improve their performance.

Health-conscious individuals or Health Guardians”: they are health-conscious people prioritizing longevity and overall well-being over peak physical performance. Their main goal is to maintain health and prevent lifestyle diseases. They are motivated by long-term wellness rather than short-term achievements. They are loyal to applications supporting sustainable health practices. They use meditation and mindfulness apps, like Headspace.

The target audience for the MHW-App is the “Balanced Lifters” (Intermediates) and the “Fanatic Lifters” (professionals) due to the app's professional tools.

Based on the deep interview findings, the athletes were motivated by the positive outcomes and gains during their fitness journey, including the positive feedback. Social media used to be a motivator factor in their lives, but the systems and habits they built are now the driving factor. According to the most skilled trainer, who has 25 years of experience, clients have only three weeks to see progress. If they do not see results, they may give up. His motivating technique only focuses on education and progress support.

Challenges, pain points, and frustrations: Primary data, gathered from interviews and questionnaires, is used to qualitatively identify users' challenges and pain points.

The deep interview answers were the following for presenting the most significant challenges during the fitness journey:

- “My biggest challenge is that I am maximalist; most of the time, I am unsatisfied.”
- “It is difficult to keep balance; preparing for the competition requires “all in” mentality.”
- “It is challenging to manage the dieting and training with my physical work.”
- “When I skip a few trainings, I feel weak; it frustrates me.”

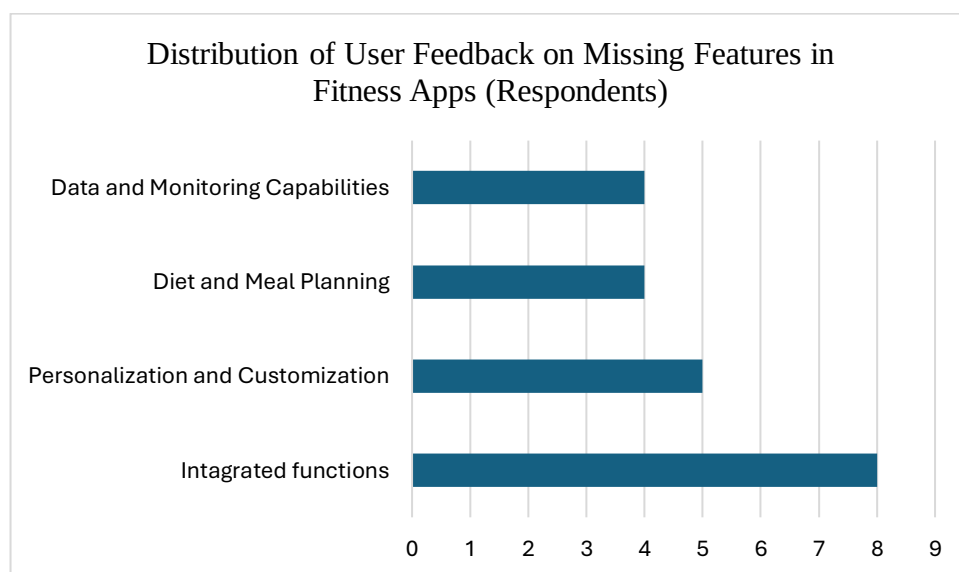
These answers highlight that the target audience belongs to the “balanced or fanatic lifters” categories. They present dedication and an emotional commitment to their fitness journeys. Statements like “I am a maximalist” highlight the pursuit of excellence, often paired with high expectations and self-discipline. This group requires the most tools to support their goals and provide consistent tracking. Responses like “When I skip a few trainings, I feel weak; it frustrates me.” represent the psychological impact of missed sessions and the drive to maintain consistency.

The questionnaire measured user pain points and evaluated the distribution of user feedback on missing features in fitness apps. This analysis used qualitative data, which provided crucial information for app validation and for potential USPs.

Some of the questionnaire feedback were the following for presenting the most significant problems with the used fitness apps:

- “I would prefer an app that includes everything, eliminating the need for multiple apps.”
- “Not personalized enough.”
- “Lack of meal planning.”
- “Lack of precise information”
- “Lack of motivation to use the app”
- “Comprehensive functions.”
- “Accurate workout definitions.”

Furthermore, the answers included the lack of transparency, Hungarian language support, and modern design. These feedbacks were the most common, clarifying the potential need for the MHW-App. The distribution of user feedback on missing features in fitness apps was the following: eight respondents expressed the need for integration; they do not want to use different apps for different areas like diet or workout logging. The personalization and customization as the desired function was the second on the list with a score of 5 (respondents). The feedback seems to present that the users are not satisfied with the current fitness apps in relation to personalization and customization. The third most common request was the diet and meal planning functions, with a score of 4 (respondents); with the same score, the more advanced and punctual data monitoring request. The lack of motivation-related answers proves the significance of the Hooked Model's implications for designing an app that can build user habits.



**Figure 3: Distribution of User Feedback on Missing Features in Fitness Apps**

Based on the questionnaire findings, with a population size of 178, the distribution of the most demanded features is the following: 37,1% of them would use diet planning the most, 24,2% would use progress tracking the most, 16,3% would use workout planning, 13,5% would use workout planning the most, and 9% would use the diet diary function.

Technology Acceptance Model: the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theoretically suggests that Perceived Usefulness can be the primary driver of potential user interest in an integrated fitness tool among “balanced” and “fanatic lifters.” Hypothetically, the MHW-app's planned features, like diet planning, could meet unmet needs, aligning with TAM’s principle that user-perceived utility impacts adoption intentions. With an intuitive and customizable design, the Perceived Ease of Use could theoretically impact the acceptance (Pobee, 2021).

## 8. VALIDATION

This chapter evaluates the study findings, focusing on the hypotheses and the market viability of the MHW-App. To validate the application during the pre-launch phase, it was crucial to analyze the market size, macro and microenvironment, and target audience demographic and psychographic characteristics. Based on this analysis, the validation chapter aims to understand the research findings, presenting a clear conclusion about the app’s market potential.

### **The hypotheses were the following:**

1. There is demand for an application with transparent diet planning.
2. There is a demand for an application that integrates workout and nutrition-related functions, providing workout planning and logging, as well as diet planning and logging.
3. There is a demand for an application that provides a platform meeting professional standards regarding progress tracking and data inputs.
4. The functionalities offered by the described application represent USPs, it is a valid market gap.
5. The Hungarian market presents ideal market conditions to launch the described application.

Validation test of Hypothesis 1 - demand with transparent diet planning: the qualitative data was gathered through questionnaires and interviews that identified a significant need for diet planning by applications. The third most frequent user request was diet planning. Specific feedback highlighted the limitations of current applications: "Most of them can only track workouts or diet, but none can do both simultaneously. However, maybe one exists; I have not

found it yet." The quantitative result of the questionnaire presented the need with the leading 37,1% as the most demanded feature.

Outcome: primary data supports a significant demand for a transparent diet planning application.

Validation test of Hypothesis 2 - demand for multifunctionality: the qualitative data was gathered through questionnaires and interviews, which identified a significant need for multifunctionality. The most frequent user request was the integration of workout and nutrition-related functions. Specific feedback highlighted the need for the mentioned service: "I would prefer an app that includes everything, eliminating the need for multiple apps."

Outcome: primary data supports a significant demand for an application that integrates workout and nutrition-related functions, providing workout planning and logging, as well as diet planning and logging.

Validation test of Hypothesis 3 - demand for professional grades: based on the questionnaire findings, the second most requested attribute was the transparency and customizability, while the third was the more advanced and punctual data monitoring request. 24,2% of the respondents would use progress tracking the most. Based on these findings, it seems that the users would rather use a customizable, transparent platform than a more complex application.

Outcome: primary data supports the demand for an application that provides a platform meeting professional standards regarding progress tracking and data inputs, but the transparency and customizability seem as relevant as the professional grades.

Validation test of Hypothesis 4 - valid USPs and market gap: this hypothesis addresses a possible misconception about market participants by assessing whether the unique selling propositions (USPs) are unique and reveal an actual market gap.

Outcome: based on the competitor analysis, there is no evidence of a Health and Wellness coaching application that is present in the market or used by a noticeable number of users that provides these features.

Validation test of Hypothesis 5 – ideal market conditions in Hungary: Based on the market size calculation and the macro-environmental factors, the Hungarian market presents finite initial viability for the MHW-App. There are significant limitations in purchasing power (below the EU average) and intense competition from other apps like YAZIO. While the market is feasible for initial validation, international scaling can be essential.

## **9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes and implements the study findings. The focus will be on implementing the Hooked Model and using the Lean Startup Methodology. Implementing the Lean Startup contains the main characteristics of the methodology, completing this with the Hooked Model, which supports habit-forming mechanisms. Presenting these will outline how each methodology enhances the app's functionality. A descriptive presentation of the models used can be found in the research framework chapter.

### **9.2 Implementation of Lean Startup Methodology**

Lean startup is a methodology for developing businesses and products that seek to shorten product development and rapidly realize if a proposed business model is viable. It combines business hypothesis-driven experimentation, iterative product releases, and validation. Lean startup highlights customer feedback over intuition and flexibility over planning. This methodology allows recovery from failures more often than traditional ways of product development (Eisenmann, 2013).

According to Eric Ries, the Lean Startup methodology consists of five principles. The first is According to Eric Ries, the Lean Startup methodology consists of five principles. The first is "Entrepreneurs are everywhere." This refers to employees and founders who should employ the Lean Startup approach at organizations of all sizes across various industries. The second principle is "Entrepreneurship is management." Due to inherent uncertainty, startups require innovative management, which assists them in building a sustainable business through validated learning. The third principle is validated learning: "The goal of a startup is to figure out the right thing to build — the thing customers want and will pay for — as quickly as possible." This goal is achieved via regular experimentation around each component of the startup's vision. The fourth is the Build, Measure, Learn feedback loop, in which startups "turn ideas into products, measure how customers respond, and then learn whether to pivot or persevere." The fifth is the Innovation accounting. "To drive growth and ensure successful innovation, startups must focus on measuring progress, setting milestones, and prioritizing work" (Almanac, 2023). In this implementation, the Build, Measure, Learn feedback Loop, the development of value hypothesis and the MVP testing will be covered.

Build-Measure-Learn feedback loop: it is an iterative process in Lean Startup that involves creating a Minimal Viable Product (MVP), measuring customer response, and using insights to decide whether to refine or modify the approach (Ries, 2019). The leap-of-faith assumption is that Hungarian fitness enthusiasts and professionals want an integrated fitness app that combines diet, workout tracking, and planning with transparent and advanced features. They will pay for this unique functionality. The growth hypothesis is that Hungarian users will pay a 2000 HUF monthly subscription to access the MHW-App's premium features, including professional-grade workout and diet tracking and planning. The engine of growth will be a paid engine, relying on subscription revenue to sustain and grow the user base. If the MHW-App hypothetically would use a smoke screen MVP, including a landing page, it would be able to test user interest and willingness to pay.

Value hypothesis: focuses on the value of the product to customers. The value Hypothesis for the MHW-App is that Hungarian fitness enthusiasts will pay 2,000 HUF per month to use the service, which provides multifunctional solutions, including diet planning, which current apps do not fully offer.

MVP development: a minimum viable product (MVP) has enough features to attract early adopters and validate the product idea early in the development cycle. Because the agile methodology focuses on validating and iterating products based on user input, the MVP plays a significant role in agile development. The MVP can support the product team in receiving user feedback as quickly as possible to iterate and enhance the product. Developing a minimum viable product can be beneficial for several reasons, such as quickly releasing a product to the market and testing a concept with actual users before investing in its full development. It helps minimize the time and resources (productplan.com, s.a.). The MVP development for the MHW-App is hypothetically achievable without developing the actual application. Instead, an initial version could be a landing page for a smoke test to evaluate potential demand for the service. If the outcomes validate hypotheses related to demand, the lean methodology could guide subsequent development. Based on primary data collection, the main user requests are multifunctionality, followed by a customizable platform, diet planning, and data monitoring. Evaluating resource expenditure for each feature indicates that progress and workout-related features are less resource-demanding. Nutrition-related functions require a more advanced UX design due to innovation level and database complexity. Considering these factors is essential for MVP development for the service.

### 9.3 Implementation of Hooked Model

In this implementation the theory of the MHW-App will be used as an existing service. “The *Hooked Model* is a way of describing a user’s interactions with a product as they pass through four phases: a trigger to begin using the product, an action to satisfy the trigger, a variable reward for the action, and some type of investment that, ultimately, makes the product more valuable to the user” (Eyal, s.a.). The MHW-App's business model requires users to form habits to increase Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV) and reduce churn rates by keeping users engaged with features like diet and workout logging. The expected engagement frequency is multiple daily use, particularly around meals and workouts.

**Triggers:** The user's pre-habit behavior includes preparing for the workout and preparing a meal. Internal Triggers include the desire to improve health and fitness outcomes and the emotional drive for social acceptance. The Trigger Narrative is this: "Whenever users need to track their diet and exercise, they turn to the MHW-App for progress tracking and future planning." In relation to timing, the external trigger sends Notifications before scheduled mealtimes or workouts to remind users to log their activities to align with users' pre-meal and pre-workout periods. The external Triggers can be Email reminders or push notifications.

**Action:** the MHW-App’s process from trigger to habitual behavior involves several steps, like data inputs. This complexity may introduce potential usability barriers concerning the time and effort required for detailed data logging and customization. These factors may impact user engagement, as more significant cognitive load and effort.

**Variable rewards:** the primary information validates that the variable rewards enhance motivation, primarily through features supporting personal progress and social recognition. The "Rewards of the Tribe" sharing milestones and receiving community support. The "Rewards of the Hunt" provides achievements, satisfying the drive for progress gain. Lastly, "Rewards of the Self," like badges or streaks to fulfill users' intrinsic need for accomplishments.

**Investment:** the personalized data history presents value over time by using the diary or planning functions. The progress function inputs also count as investments.

## 10. SUMMARY

The first research question aimed to understand how the inductive approach modifies the previous findings. This approach provided qualitative data in the form of interviews. The results did not significantly modify the outcomes of the deductive approach. However, some psychographic information was identified and presented in the target audience analysis, which is essential for the development. The main characteristics included maximalism and dissatisfaction with the physique.

The second research question asked whether the formulated hypotheses were valid concerning the USPs, user needs, and market conditions. The overall study findings presented diverse outcomes for the market viability of the MHW-App. The study first aimed to calculate the market size in Hungary, which is a benchmark for financial planning, scaling, and the startup's overall success. The estimation revealed approximately 41 119 users representing the achievable subset of SAM that the startup could realistically capture in Hungary. The next chapter analyzed the macro-environment, including the market trends and economic and technological factors, which presented different outcomes. The market trends provide ideal conditions supporting validity while the usage rate of Health and Wellness Coaching applications is increasing. The economic factors present diverse results. Consumer confidence is increasing in Hungary, although the purchasing power is significantly lower than the EU average. These factors present expansion limitations in Hungary, but the market is potentially feasible for initial validation. The microenvironment analysis validated hypothesis 3, which means there is no evidence of a Health and Wellness coaching application that is present in the market or used by a noticeable number of users that provides those unique features that the MHW-App. The target audience analysis, using primary data, validated Hypothesis 1 and 2, which means there is a demand for a fitness application that integrates workout and nutrition-related functions, providing workout planning and logging, as well as diet planning and logging. Hypothesis 3, which assumes a need for more advanced features, seems partly valid. It seems there is a demand for an application that provides a platform meeting professional standards regarding progress tracking and data inputs, but the transparency and customizability seem as relevant as the professional grades.

The third research question asked about the improvement opportunities in the Digital Fitness and Well-being Market. The questionnaire and interview outcomes highlighted the need for multifunctionality, diet planning, transparency, customizability, and a more punctual, data-

driven solution. In Chapter 9, the implementation of the findings was discussed. The Lean Startup Methodology and the Hooked Model proved their significance; by building an MVP and following the lean methodology, the service can quickly test the concept with actual users before investing in its full development, while it also helps minimize time and resources. Due to the MHW-App functionalities like diet or workout logging, the service can form habits using the Hooked Model to reduce churn and increase the CLTV.

The study's conclusion is that the Digital Fitness and Well-being market is rapidly growing in Hungary, but significant constraints in purchasing power generate challenging conditions for new market participants. The theoretical MHW-App, however, presents very promising results for the overall market viability.

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## APPENDIX

### **Interview questions**

*Demographic Information (for all participants):*

Age: How old are you?

Occupation: What is your occupation?

### **For Clients / Average Users**

*Qualifying Questions*

Sport Type: What type of sport do you do?

Fitness Background: How long have you been working out?

*General Questions* Technology Use: How do you incorporate technology in your work? Are there any gadgets or apps that you find particularly helpful?

*Concrete Questions*

Challenges: What are the biggest challenges you face during your fitness journey?

Planning and Logging: How do you plan and log your workouts and meals? How important is this, and what are the biggest challenges you face?

Progress Tracking: Can you describe how you track your progress towards your fitness goals? How important is this tracking to you, and what are the biggest challenges you face in this process?

Integration Needs: How useful do you find the integration of workout planning and diet tracking in a single tool or service? Have you had any experiences with such integrated solutions?

Consultation with Trainers or Nutritionists: Have you ever consulted with a personal trainer or a sports nutritionist, either online or offline? Which platform did you use, and what aspects did they help you with (e.g., diet, workout plan)? Was the experience satisfying? Why or why not?

Feature Preferences and Improvement Areas: What features do you find most useful in the fitness tools or services you use, and why are these features important to you? Additionally, what aspects could be improved, and what new features or enhancements would you find useful and likely use?

Engagement Barriers: What factors make you continue using a fitness tool or service over time? Conversely, what issues cause you to stop using them?

Support and Social Features: How do your support network (friends, family, coach) and social features (sharing progress, joining groups) help you stay motivated and engaged? Can you provide an example

Pricing: Have you ever paid for a fitness-related app or service? If so, could you provide more details?

### **For Personal Trainers:**

#### *Qualifying Questions:*

Experience: How long have you been working as a personal trainer/sports nutritionist?

Clientele: What types of clients do you typically work with (e.g., beginners, athletes, weight loss, muscle gain)?

#### *General Questions:*

Technology in Training/Nutrition: How do you incorporate technology into your training/nutrition programs? Are there any specific apps or gadgets you find particularly useful?

#### *Concrete Questions:*

Challenges: What are the biggest challenges you face working as a trainer/nutritionist?

Planning and Logging: How do you plan and log your clients' workouts and meals, and what challenges do you face during that process?

Progress Tracking: Can you describe how you track your clients' progress towards their fitness and nutritional goals? How important is this tracking to you and your clients, and what are the biggest challenges in this process?

Integration Needs: How useful do you find the integration of workout planning and diet tracking in a single tool or service? Have you had any experiences with such integrated solutions?

Client Consultation: Do you consult with clients online or offline? Which platforms do you use, and are you and your clients satisfied with these experiences?

Feature Preferences and Improvement Areas: What features do you find most useful in the fitness/nutritional tools or services you use for your clients, and why are these features important? Additionally, what aspects could be improved, and what new features or enhancements would you find useful and likely use?

Engagement Barriers: How do you keep your clients engaged with your service over time?

Conversely, what issues cause them to stop using them?

Support: How do you motivate your clients?

Pricing: Have you ever paid for a fitness-related app or service? If so, could you provide more details.

### **Questionnaire questions**

Hány éves vagy? (How old are you?)

Mi a nemed? (What is your gender?)

Mi a foglalkozásod? (What is your occupation?)

Mióta edzel? (How long have you been training?)

Tapasztaltál már stagnálást a fejlődésedben? (Have you ever experienced a stagnation in your progress?)

Versenyeztél már? (Have you ever competed?)

Főként milyen típusú edzést végzel? (What type of training do you mainly do?)

Van edzésterved vagy étrended? (Do you have a training plan or diet?)

Vezetsz edzés vagy étkezési naplót? (Do you keep a training or diet diary?)

Nyomon követed a fejlődésed? (Do you track your progress?)

Hogyan naplózod, tervezed az edzéseidet és étkezéseidet (ha van ilyen)? (How do you log and plan your workouts and meals (if applicable)?)

Használtál már fitness app-ot vagy egyéb ezzel kapcsolatos software-t? (Have you ever used a fitness app or other related software?)

Ha használtál, melyiket? (If so, which one?)

Ha használtál, elégedett vagy velük? (If so, are you satisfied with them?)

Mit tartasz fontosabbnak a tervezés és a naplózás szempontjából: az edzést vagy az étkezést? (What do you consider more important in terms of planning and logging: training or eating?)

Használnál-e, egy alkalmazást, amely teljes körű edzés és étrend tervezést, edzés és étkezési napló vezetéset, valamint a fejlődés nyomon követését biztosítaná? (Would you use an app that provides comprehensive training and diet planning, training and diet logging, and progress tracking?)

Mennyit lennél hajlandó fizetni az említett teljes körű funkciókkal rendelkező fitness alkalmazásért? (How much would you be willing to pay for a fitness app with the comprehensive features?)

Melyik funkcióra lenne leginkább szükséged? (Which feature would you need the most?)

Szoktál rendszeresen kitűzni fitness célokat? (Do you regularly set fitness goals?)

Dolgoztál már együtt személyi edzővel vagy dietetikussal online? (Have you ever worked with a personal trainer or dietitian online?)

Ha dolgoztál már együtt személyi edzővel/dietetikussal online, melyik platformot használtad?

(If you have worked with a personal trainer/dietitian online, which platform did you use?)

Technikailag kielégítő volt a platform használata? (Was the platform technically satisfactory (if applicable)?)

Mit hiányolsz a jelenlegi fitness alkalmazásokból? (What do you miss from current fitness apps?)