

Break a sweat with these fitness influencers on Sudor



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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With gyms being forced to close due to the coronavirus, fitness trainers are battling. However, until gyms are allowed to operate under strict measures to curb the spread of Covid-19, there are alternatives for digital-savvy fitness entrepreneurs.



Emma Heap, founder of Sudor

One such opportunity is the recently launched Sudor app that allows people to train with a list of global social media fitness influencers from around the world. Locally, a number of fitness influencers are already using the app to monetise their fitness training offering and are benefiting from the platform.

Emma Heap takes us through the paces of Sudor.

■ You've been pivotal in building successful businesses in vastly different markets. Could you tell me about these?

My tech career began when I decided that investment banking was in fact, not for me! I found that I was driven by an insatiable ambition and a passion to provide tangible value to real people on a day-to-day basis.

I was lucky enough to begin working for Groupon - the fastest company ever to reach \$1 billion in revenue and a key

enabler for small businesses. Groupon took me around the globe, but it was during a secondment in South Africa that I fell in love with South Africa - and knew that I wanted to build a business that could make a difference here.

I knew I had more to learn before taking on the challenge of building my own company, so I accepted a managing director role at a tech company in Singapore, this time in the food industry. Here I learnt a lot about different cultures, and managing people - you have to be very conscious of how you interact in Asia - it's a respect driven culture and it's really important to be aware of that. It was one of my most valuable business lessons. It was a very challenging but enjoyable two years, and we succeeded in completely turning the business' customer experience around, delivering 10 times the growth in monthly orders.

This was my second big lesson - until you nail the customer experience from the moment they first interact with you to when they receive and enjoy their product, you may as well forget anything else.

▣ ***How did you eventually end up in the tech space?***

I was lucky enough to intern at a large investment bank in London during my second year of university - it was an amazing opportunity, but it taught me quickly that corporate life was not for me and it really made me think about what was important to me and what I wanted to do. MyCityDeal (soon to be acquired by Groupon) had just launched in the UK, and a friend of mine referred me for a role - I joined in 2010 and I've loved being in tech ever since.

▣ ***You're the founder of Sudor. Can you tell us a bit about this venture?***

I firmly believe that the key to success is doing something that you truly love and believe in, and have consistently applied this to my own career journey.

Marc (my co-founder) and I are both incredible passionate about fitness - whether its wild swimming, cycling, running, kite surfing or working out in the gym we do it all! We wanted to build a product that enables the next generation of entrepreneurs (we are also very passionate about small businesses) as well as one that we are proud to use - we believe Sudor is just that!

In short, Sudor (meaning sweat in Spanish) is a platform for workouts - we are the destination for when you want to do a workout in the same way that you would use Spotify for music or Netflix for watching a movie. We are proud to have over 50 of the top trainers in SA and the UK on the platform and to offer a wide variety of workouts from pilates and barre to cardio and HIIT.

Train with them:

- Mapule Ndhlovu, SA [@queenfitness](#): Adidas brand ambassador, Virgin Active HEAT model and Women's Health Nextfitstar 2016.
- Ewan Strydom, SA [@ewan_strydom](#): Aside from being a renowned fitness personality, Ewan made a name for himself as a TV presenter and radio show host.
- Bjorn Steinbach, SA [@bjornsteinbach](#): This fitness pro is also a skilled stuntman and professional actor, with productions such as *Invictus* under his belt.
- Jenni Rivett, SA & UK [@jennirivett](#): KwaZulu-Natal born trainer who had the honour of training none other than Princess Diana for 7 years, and now specialises in training older women.
- Aimee Long, UK [@aimeevictorialong](#): Fitness expert and beauty and lifestyle influencer, with the Saudi Royal family as one of her personal training clients.

- Ian Streetz, UK [@ianstreetz](#): AKA 'Mr Boxing', Ian is an ex-MMA athlete, stuntman and trained Olympic boxer.

▣ ***What sparked the idea? When and how did you get started?***

As the best ideas all start - it was over a coffee in Pauline's, Cape Town. We wanted to build a business within fitness, and one that could create an infinite amount of entrepreneurs. We both love supporting small businesses as well as working out.

▣ ***What is the goal of Sudor?***

To enable any fitness trainers to create a globally scalable business, such that their clients and fans can work out with them from anywhere in the world

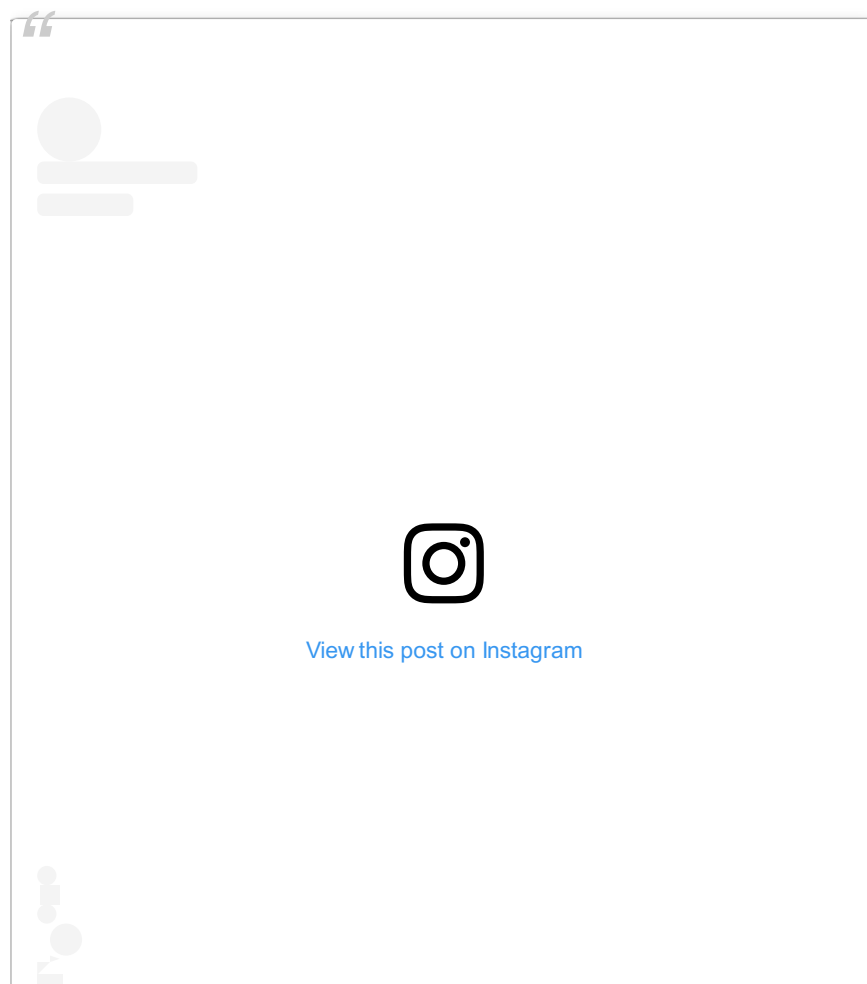
▣ ***How did the name come about?***

We wanted a name that was related to fitness, but from another language to signal our global ambitions. As I said earlier, Sudor actually means sweat in Spanish. There are 460 million Spanish speakers globally - and we can't wait to take Sudor to them.

▣ ***What are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?***

Is it clichéd to say Covid-19?! We actually launched in April 2020, one month into lockdown (in South Africa).

We have been a remote-first company from day 0, so we are set up to work across borders (we have teams in Cape Town, Berlin, Kiev and London) but not being able to meet with our clients face to face for several months, or fly to meet each other has been tough at times! We value trust and communication within the business (this extends to our clients as well) and we believe these values have helped us through this time.



When your alarm goes off on Monday morning, you might feel like hitting the snooze button, rolling over, and enjoying another hour of blissful sleep after the weekend that was... am I right? ☐. But it turns out that your first workout of the week is the most important one. So here are four reasons to get out of bed, grab a smoothie, and get the week going with Sudor every single Monday💎💎.

1 ☐Monday workouts make you more productive 💎💎. 2 ☐Monday workouts help you build habit 💎💎. 3 ☐Monday workouts help you reach goals faster 💎💎.

4 ☐Monday workouts make you happier 💎💎. . #MoveWithSudor

#MySudorJourney

A post shared by [Sudor \(@sudor.fit\)](#) on Jul 19, 2020 at 6:49am PDT

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📌 **Covid-19 has severely impacted many businesses across the globe. What was the impact on Sudor?**

It's been exciting to see the changes in the fitness industry accelerate. Garmin has seen an increase in logged activities through its wearables during this time. Sudor offers both home and gym workouts, so we were able to offer clients a great at home solution - and it's been really rewarding to see so many people using Sudor to move more through lockdown.

📌 **What's the biggest challenge you are facing during this pandemic?**

Not being able to move even faster. We have expanded into studios, launched on-demand “live” workouts and enabled self sign up for trainers in the last two months. These are all features that we didn't plan to do until 2021, but it still feels like we are not moving fast enough!

📌 **What sort of assistance will you need going forward?**

We are passionate about inspiring even more people to start their fitness journey and #MoveWithSudor. The more people that join us, the more money that our trainers will earn. Anything that helps us achieve this faster would be great!

📌 **As a successful businesswoman, what advice do you have for female entrepreneurs?**

Find companies that you can grow in (i.e. join a growing business) and where you believe your boss will be a true mentor and support to you! Over the past 10 years I've worked for some of the biggest companies in tech, and yet I've been surrounded by both men and women willing to invest in me, help me grow and encourage me to go out and achieve my goals.

If you find yourself in a situation where this is not the case (as I did once) - ask the person directly why they are behaving in a certain way, and if it's not resolved then escalate it further. Don't accept it!

At Sudor, we are committed to hiring the very best person for every role - regardless of gender. This is something that companies must proactively address - as there can be many subconscious biases that we have to proactively counteract.

On a personal note, I'm committed to being the best colleague, mentor and friend for the people around me. As a female founder this is my way of paying forward the opportunities I've had to hopefully inspire the next generation of women.

**Note: The app is currently only available on iOS, with a R150 monthly subscription that kicks in after your free trial. Sudor will be rolling out for download in the Google Play Store in the near future.*

For more, go to <https://sudor.fit/>

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