

Prescribing better behaviour

Halifax-based Kinduct Technologies would like us all to be healthier. They may have found a way to do it

Some of the fittest people in North America (including 30,000 Canadian military troops, 22,000 personal trainers, and members of the Montreal Canadiens, New York Rangers, and Orlando Magic pro sports teams, to name just a few) can thank a Halifax-based technology company for keeping their training on track.

Four years since its inception, Kinduct Technologies is just getting started on its mission to make, and keep, people from all walks of life (and ages) healthier.

Travis McDonough (pictured below), the CEO and founder of Kinduct Technologies, began his health care career as a chiropractor, but quickly moved into the business and innovation side of the field. In 2008, he was the owner of a network of multi-disciplinary clinics in Ireland when he decided to sell the operation and move, with his young family, to Nova Scotia.

For his next effort, he decided to tackle some major problems he saw in his industry.

"There is a huge gap between what the physicians were telling their patients, and what the patients understood from their physicians," McDonough says. In fact, he notes, patients may retain as little as seven per cent of the information their doctors give them, verbally or in writing.

To that end, McDonough (along with "technology genius" David Anderson) began building a huge library of 3D digital animations. Anatomy and injury animations clearly show patients what is going on in their bodies; exercise animations demonstrate how they can heal and get stronger.

Another issue that bothered McDonough: 75 per cent of deaths in Canada today are directly related to unhealthy lifestyles and bad habits. More people are dying of chronic diseases (not infectious diseases) which generally can't be treated with a pill. Healing requires behaviour and lifestyle changes, which have been difficult (perhaps impossible) to prescribe.

But Kinduct offers a way to do just that, a breakthrough that garnered McDonough the inaugural CBC Innovation Award at *Atlantic Business Magazine's* 2014 Top 50 CEO awards gala.

Kinduct draws on its library of digital animations as well as dozens of other features (fitness assessment tools and reports, program builders, journals, logs, rehab class generators, and research/education resources) to create individual, private, on-line ecosystems for its users, whether they are patients, athletes, or school kids taking on a fitness challenge.

Users login to see nutrition plans, prescribed exercises, and relevant research, FAQs and information. The software tracks, monitors, and analyzes their progress, sometimes with the help of wearable devices. Milestones are established and attaining them is rewarded. Kinduct offers individuals exactly what they "need to do to participate in their own health care," says McDonough.

"We call it 'prescriptive digital therapeutics,'" McDonough says. It represents a new way to "engage and activate; educate and empower" to get people to change their behaviour (and their health) for the better.

Kinduct is applied in a number of exciting ways. The pro sports platform, for example, allows coaches and players to track a player's statistics, abilities, liabilities, potential, and even compare him or her to other athletes. That analysis allows for customized, extremely targeted training and nutritional programs which can then be monitored.

Kinduct's other platforms are designed for the health care, corporate wellness, fitness, Forces, and education sectors. Partners and clients include Physical Education Canada, Canadian Fitness Professionals (Canfitpro), the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Capital Health (Nova Scotia's largest primary care hospital, Telus health, Stryker, and many more.

Because it is a "white label" product (Kinduct's expert team creates the content; each organization customizes the software with its own name, brand, and logo), Kinduct may not be a household name, but, with over 30 employees, a second office in the United States, and tens of thousands of users already, it may soon be a household product.

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