

GMCP Ep. 028 - Chatting with Marijn Kortekaas from Physitrack

[INTRO MUSIC]

This is the Grow My Clinic Podcast by Clinic Mastery where we help you deliver amazing client experiences to grow your clinic.

JACK: Well, welcome to another episode of the [Grow My Clinic](#) podcast. My name is Jack O'Brien and I am excited to bring you another guest to the podcast today. We have with us Marijn Kortekaas from [Physitrack](#). Marijn, how are you today?

MARIJN: Good, Jack. How are you mate? Good to be with you.

JACK: I am fantastic. It is great to have you on the podcast.

Now, for those who are not familiar, Marijn runs Physitrack across Australia and across the world. Marijn, what is your official title in Physitrack?

MARIJN: Well, I am part of the business so I own a small slice of the business, and Program Director for the Region of Asia Pacific, which is the smallest: Australia, New Zealand, those quite a number of countries in Asia that are better getting up to speed as well.

JACK: Fantastic. And you have been around Physitrack nearly since day one, is that right?

MARIJN: Yeah, yeah. So it has been a while. So coming up, we - three or four years. So yeah, more or less from the day it launched in Australia [inaudible]. It has been a while.

JACK: Okay. So let us - look, there are many rabbit holes we could go now here today on the podcast. But I would love to get a little bit of background on yourself. Obviously, it is not a typical Aussie-[inaudible] accent you have going on. So, who is Marijn and how did you end up to where you are today?

MARIJN: Yeah, sure. I think I'm trying to cover up that accent quite well, but yeah.

I was actually born in Amsterdam, in Holland, and moved to Australia when I was—gee, it must be 15 years now. So when I was [inaudible] twenty in a bit.

So originally, I came from Amsterdam, grew up there and studied Business Management but focusing on Tourism. So that was my major there, and I have worked with Nike for a while. So it was my first job out of uni, it was very different. I do not know really health care over there obviously, but I worked with Nike for a long time looking after distributors at the time in the Middle East.

It was very interesting, shipping containers of runners to countries like Lebanon and Saudi Arabia and Israel, so yeah, making sure that those shoe shippers did not end up in [inaudible]. But it is a bit sensitive, but it was a great first job to be honest out of uni, working for a company like that, with a culture, and a lot of people working for Nike. Yeah, I had a lot of fun as my first job.

I was actually quite fortunate to be able to join Nike here in Australia, and so that was about fifteen years ago. Did some things in RT and in customer operations. And the few other things after that in the industry called “scent marketing”. So using fragrances to create an ambience in retail stores, and hotels, quite different.

A lot of people probably would walk into a retail store and would really know, at least consciously know, that there is something in the air, but that is what the company did that I worked for at the time, so we were looking after distributors throughout the Asia Pacific mostly, so there was quite a bit of travel involved and [inaudible] they are marketing-focused and sales-focused as well during those years.

JACK: Okay, interesting. Now you’re in Physitrack and has been there for a couple of years.

To get listeners up to speed, Physitrack is an all-in-one solution for exercise prescription, telehealth, outcome tracking - all sorts of elements of the patient experience when it comes to [inaudible] software in the allied health space. And listeners, we’ll get to the details, the ins and outs of Physitrack later in this episode and in future episodes.

But Marijin, interesting question I had for you: you are working at Physitrack now and you’re not a health professional, and you’re working in scent marketing, and I assume you did not study scent marketing at the university. So, how does it work

for you being in roles and dealing with people in something that you're not trained in as such?

MARIJN: I guess I'm a bit of a generalist to be honest. If I like a product, if I like the company as a whole, then I'm pretty flexible in learning new things pretty quickly. And Physitrack is a good example. You [inaudible] background other than being a patient of a physio for many years. And so for me, it was a bit of a deep dive, obviously. I think it's all about listening, and you're just absorbing as much as you can, and then using any skills you have learned in the past to apply those skills, combine those with new skills and new knowledge. Being able to talk the talk and understand certain terminologies is key. Other than that, just basically people skills and being able to build relationships, which really crosses over into many different jobs and career paths. So I think that was probably, for me, key to just get up to speed on lingo, regulation, processes as soon as possible.

JACK: Okay. Yeah, it's fascinating. And so can you touch a little bit more on your experience at Nike? Most of us aren't familiar that shoes don't cost \$200-\$300 to make, and yet Nike is a brand that - it's a premium brand like Apple and Lexus and BMW; these brands can sell products for way more than they cost to make.

What are some of the lessons that you learned out of working for Nike and marketing a product around experience beyond just what it's worth?

MARIJN: Yeah. You mentioned an interesting brand, and I think most of those brands - I think most brands in general - they try to be quite aspirational. I mean, when it comes to Nike, you see the amounts of money they spend on sponsorship of [inaudible] for example. It's all about connecting the consumer to an athlete and really aspire, helping consumers to aspire someone, to be someone that they would love to be. Whether it's Delaney, or whether it's the next Tiger Woods - it could be anyone.

So I think Nike, you said that as an example, in the end, it's one big marketing, really, and they happen to sell shoes or sporting [inaudible], but in the end, it's a marketing company that creates a very compelling package in terms of their offering which, again, is more than a pair of sports shoes that might only be [inaudible] to manufacture. But I suppose the value that the consumers see around those products.

[Inaudible] There's something inspiration, like when I wear these shoes, I feel good, go out for a run. Those people [inaudible] for a run. Those people will go to the gym because they forget about themselves.

There's a whole process of - elements that I associate with companies like Nike.

JACK: It's interesting. And I think, for clinic owners that are listening, that marketing to people's aspirations is often something that's far more valuable than just marketing to their problems. Even the solution that you provide, they have to get beyond the solution to their aspiration.

I was working with clinic owners today. For those who are playing with Facebook Ads in the past, you'd be familiar that you can't market to people's problems, but to market to their aspirations. It comes in a far lower acquisition cost; you're spending less when you're talking about aspirations.

What about the scent-marketing, Marijin - can you speak to that? So, we're talking about smelly, olfactory, thing through the people's noses if things are getting lost here in translation. What does scent marketing have to do with being able to sell, or being able to convince people to buy?

MARIJN: Again, it's all about connecting a brand to the consumer, and our sense of smell is basically our strongest sense that we have. It's basically the scent receptors in our nose are directly linked to our limbic system in our brains that's responsible for anything, from emotions to long term memory.

So when you walk into a retail store, you had a great experience, great customer service. The environment in terms of the visuals is great, music is playing. And when you add scent to that, whenever you smell that scent two months, two years, twenty years down the track, it really takes you back in this. It's a bit of a well-know factor. It's actually back to that experience.

That's why the use of scent as a marketing tool is such a powerful way to connect a brand to a consumer, create a better experience. And also, make people come back in a way, a low level, subconscious way.

So it was a lot of fun working with retailers and hotels as well. To me, I look at their brand and say, what's the type of consumer or guests that's coming to your

property? What kind of message do you want to portray as a brand? And taking those brand elements, and you would then design a fragrance around it to diffuse.

A lot of hotels in particular, they take it a step further by selling scented products. So whether it's a candle or a room spray with the same scent. So in a way, it allows consumers to take a piece of the brand home, which is a pretty powerful tool.

JACK: Fascinating. Listeners, Marijin presented at one of our recent workshops in Sydney in March 2018. [Inaudible] Marijin, that was our most popular segment of that weekend; it was fascinating. And for Clinic Mastery Business Academy members, you can find that recording inside the content portal.

Some of the key learnings that we took away from that, with things like certain scents, people familiarize with certain environments. So, can you speak to a day spa environment, how's a certain type of scent, a sporting retail shop. What are those types of scents?

MARIJN: Yeah, absolutely! So it's quite interesting, and again it comes down to certain notes that are part of certain scents.

There's a lot of research done on pure essential, natural oils, also man-made fragrances. So if you take citrus fragrances for example, they're shown to be antidepressant, working on an [inaudible] level. Even in other [inaudible] energizing as well. So that's the kind of environment that you would like to create as a clinic owner for example. You can think of citrus type of scents. In particular, in winter sometimes where - maybe not so much in Brisbane or up north, but definitely here in Melbourne, it gets the [inaudible] to have that uplifting, energizing scent when you're walking through a clinic. It really helps to, even help your clients put them in a certain frame of mind.

So you can throw a scent. Recently [inaudible] day spa scent as you've mentioned. Anything like lavender for example is actually quite soothing and calming as well that you can add to the - and creating a completely different experience as soon as you walk in.

So again, with scent, just by diffusing a different scent in a space, you can really change the whole ambience with one scent, so it's quite powerful.

JACK: Yeah, very powerful. Although it's not a clinical approach, if something really has an impact on clinical outcomes, when patients are in a certain frame of mind, or they're feeling relaxed, energized - it primes them to have a great experience with their therapists. And we know, when there's a really healthy patient-therapist interaction, the relationship that they get the outcomes, and they adhere to their exercise programs if they're in the right state of mind, which leads us to Physitrack when it comes to exercise programs.

Can you explain to us what Physitrack is and why it was developed? Why was there a need for something like Physitrack.

MARIJN: So Physitrack, it was founded by two guys back in Europe back in 2012. It's actually one of the founders brought to us by the [inaudible], an ACL procedure done, and was given a piece of paper with some exercises. It was laying on his bed, had plenty of time to look at this piece of paper, and thought there must be a better way to motivate patients, actually to help patients to better remember their exercises, for them to actually do the exercise in the first place. So that's how it all started. That's how the seed was planted.

So the two co-founders, they came together. Spent about two years and a few million dollars in terms of development to get the first version up and running back in 2014. And from there, basically developed on and tweaked and pivoted away from - actually quite a bit from the initial version where it was all about exercise prescription with a bit of outcomes checking. Then from there, it has grown to basically become all about client engagement.

So basically, exercise is just one of the four components as you've mentioned before, and now you can check anything from adherence, pain scores.

Outcome measures is another big one. So there are 50 outcome measures you can assign to clients, see those results in real time as a practitioner, so great [inaudible] work cover claims, [inaudible], but then also adding things like education.

So patient education is equally more important, sometimes even more important than exercise, to make sure that they understand their condition and how to best manage it.

And the last component that we added late last year was telehealth. So you have the option to have video calls with your clients, messaging with your clients.

So really, just again, on one hand opening up opportunities for practitioners to treat their clients [inaudible] where applicable, but also for clients to sometimes find a practitioner that may not live around the corner, but is the right practitioner for their condition. That person could be living 500 kilometers away.

So really just looking at where is healthcare going and how we can basically look after both practitioners and client.

JACK: Yeah. It's such a brilliant product; we're using it now in my personal clinic and across a lot of our Clinic Mastery members.

So for those who aren't familiar, it's a cloud-based solution, essentially, that you subscribe per user. You can access how many exercises now, Marijin? What are we up to?

MARIJN: Yeah, just under 3,800. Just another 250 last month, and that's basically updated every couple of months where we spend the weekend in our studio in London, and pushed another 200 or 300 exercises. So it's a growing library.

JACK: It's a huge library of exercises, and on top of that library of 3,800, you can put in your own custom exercises. Within a couple of clicks and a couple of seconds, you can customize your own exercises.

Like you mentioned, there's a whole bunch of outcome measures. And for those who are interested in the details, we're going to press into that in a future episode, but you can jump over to clinicmastery.com/physitrack1, there's a six-part series there on the different features that you can utilize.

It lives in the cloud, and it's something that any practitioner can assign a program to their patient, and then send it to that patient's phone. That is how it works, Marijin?

MARIJN: Yeah, that's right. So as a client, you download [PhysiApp](#), which is the client app, and that's free to download - iOS, Android, Apple Watch, or via the computer, you can just jump online as well as a client. Enter an access code and it gives you direct access to your customized exercise program, educational content, outcome measures.

So as a client, super easy. That's [inaudible] obviously to take away any hurdles for clients to come up with excuses to not [inaudible] their exercises, so we try to remove those [inaudible]

JACK: Yeah, it's a super smooth process. So, before we get into the details of it, can you tell us about the story. So from the founders back over in Europe, what was the evolution? Physitrack's growth curve has been up to the right fairly steeply. What was some of the reasons behind that?

MARIJN: We started with 200 exercise videos, and we thought we had done a pretty good job, until we started actually talking to some of our very early users and get an avalanche of feedback, which is fantastic. We still call at least one user a day to bring feedback.

JACK: Wow! Is that being deliberate?

MARIJN: Absolutely! Our CEO and our CTOs, our co-founders, they call users everyday. [Inaudible] every single day, one way or another, and to collect feedback.

JACK: That's a really interesting lesson for clinic owners there. I'm sure you guys have thousands and hundreds and thousands of users, but you still speak to them one on one. Amazing.

MARIJN: Absolutely. It's really important. It's really appreciated, I think, but on the other hand, it just gives us really valuable information about what works and what doesn't, and that's what we can take with the next [inaudible] to update.

JACK: Sure.

MARIJN: It is how we started. Here in Australia for example, it was one of the first markets that we launched. One of our key ways of how we had a massive breakthrough - two things in Australia - one, partnered with the APA. So it's been fantastic.

So it's all about education of members, and we do the same with [inaudible] as well. But the other thing that really helped us was partnering with Apple. Pretty cool partnership there where probably about three years ago now, they knocked on our door and said, "We love what you guys do. Do you want to become part of our mobility partner program?"

Basically, what it is is Apple helps up and coming companies to create the best possible experience on iOS. They want to sell iPads, but obviously they have to have some really cool apps. [Inaudible] on iOS which is what they helped us with. We spent some time with their developers in Cupertino in California. So they actually helped us develop an iOS app for practitioners, so the Physitrack version for iOS.

So as a practitioner, on your iPad/iPhone, you can be mobile, video [inaudible] if you want to from inside the app and use the videos for your program.

So Apple's involvement on the sidelines has been fantastic. That's still our partnership that's on-going.

JACK: Fascinating. And so now, I would guess you would be one of the prominent exercise software providers across Australia, but what's been some of the challenges with your role and rolling out across Australia? Obviously, we're dealing with physiotherapists and exercise physiologists, by a number of different professions and practice management software... What are some of the challenges and how have you managed to overcome them?

MARIJN: Probably the first challenge was to educate clients or practitioners on Physitrack and how Physitrack is quite different from a lot of other exercise prescription software.

JACK: It's such a big jump, right, from those who might just have been photocopying the old Manila folder, or even the server-based exercise prescription. Cloud-based technology is still a pretty foreign world for a lot of people.

MARIJN: Yeah. It is. It definitely used to be even more so probably three or four years ago obviously, when a lot of people were coming from paper to digital, and I think that jump was pretty big. So that, I suppose, was the biggest challenge for us initially. And the next challenge was to educate challenge to - there are some other exercise prescription provider out there, but how is Physitrack different? Because some people look at it and just within ten seconds, they assume it's something similar, and then it comes down to price, and then some of those people sign up and some of those people don't. But that was one of our biggest challenges.

The other one really, and this came down to feedback [inaudible]. Initially, we didn't integrate with a lot of practice management systems at all, actually, which is something we placed in and really focused on and it lasted two years.

So we now integrate with most practice management systems in Australia; quite a few overseas nowadays as well. And it really saves a ton of time by helping your clients straight from your PMS into Physitrack.

We also started uploading exercise programs back from Physitrack into the PMS, into client notes, so again, certainly it saves you a ton of time. It really means you can focus on your PMS, for sure, your [inaudible] platform, and all that key data out of Physitrack is listed in there as well. So those were some of the challenges.

Again, this really comes down to talking to users, understanding how do you use Physitrack? What can we improve? Especially integrations with PMSes has been a big one for us, too.

JACK: Yeah, that's huge. It's a massive differentiator. And the speed that that creates, it shortcuts the process. On our end, we can click a predefined program, and then add in one or so exercises, add an outcome measure; the patient's already there, and it's done. You can assign a comprehensive exercise program with tracking and outcome measures, and education to the right patient, to their phone and email within 60 seconds. It's absolutely remarkable.

So, what are some of the cool testimonies, stories you've heard of practitioners using this and overcoming some of the barriers. Have you got any interesting stories for us.

MARIJN: Absolutely. In particular, when we started launching the telehealth component. So we see some really exciting examples where practitioners started rolling out particular programs to a lot more clients than they could have done in the past.

So Royal Flying Doctors, for example, in Tasmania. There's an exercise physiologist there, Stephen Stone. He's actually just won EP of the Year [inaudible]. Especially using Physitrack across a big part of Tasmania where they would allow a preventative health program, which they actually used Physitrack for to assign programs in education, have telehealth consultations and follow ups as well.

So for us, it's really satisfying to see that technology that we believe in is being used in ways that really benefit a lot more clients; a lot more clients can be reached.

So that's one of the many examples. And another example that we didn't really design Physitrack for but is equally exciting is to use it at Universities for clinical research.

So obviously a lot of unis now, whether it's with physios or EPs, or dietitians using a platform, to be able to reach a much bigger [inaudible] of patients as part of the study, and just basically being able to collect outcomes data remotely. Yeah, there are some really cool examples out there.

JACK: Fantastic. That's super exciting. From your background in Nike and creating smelly stuff all the way through to rolling out this game-changing exercise prescription in telehealth and tracking software. Remarkable.

In future episodes, we're going to dig into some of the mechanics and how people are using it, some of the unknown features and all that fun stuff. But for now, if people want to learn more after this episode, where should they go to find out more about what you do?

MARIJN: So if you want to have a quick look and jump on a free demo, just go to physitrack.com - nice and easy, big button on the homepage to start your demo. Or on your Clinic Mastery website, of course, clinicmastery.com/physitrack1 to find some of those episodes you recorded to delve into the product deeper. So those are two good places to start.

JACK: Fantastic. Marijin, it has been lovely having you on the Grow My clinic podcast.

Listeners, you can head to those links that were just mentioned, and any other notes from this episode will be at clinicmastery.com/podcast. All of the show notes, everything that we've mentioned and referred to today, you can grab all the notes over there.

And if you want to grow your clinic, there is a free resource for you to grab over there called the [Grow My Clinic Online Course](#).

Listeners, thanks for tuning in to another episode of the Grow My Clinic podcast.

Marijin, Thanks for joining us!

MARIJN: Thanks, Jack! It was great.

JACK: And we'll be with you in another episode really soon.

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