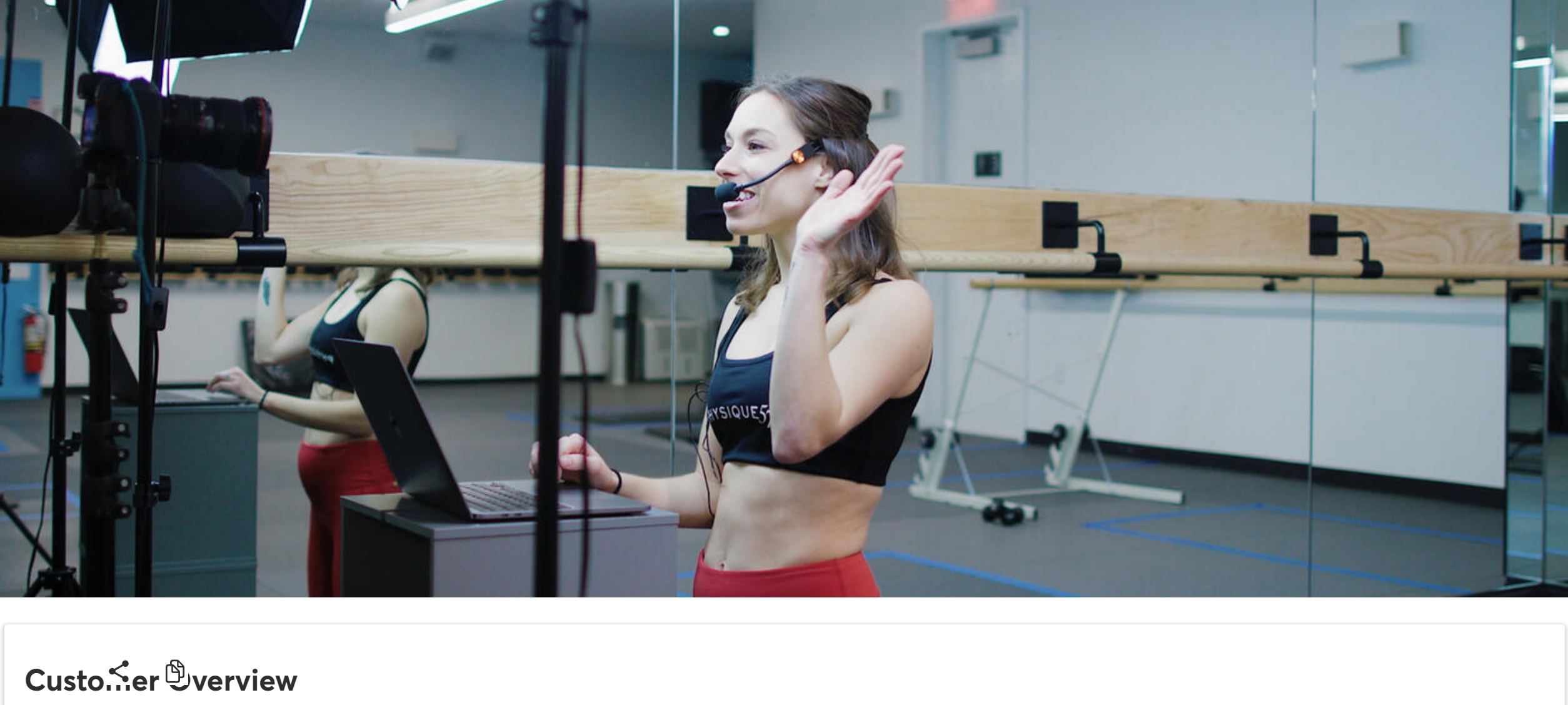


MINDBODY CUSTOMER STORY

How Physique 57 Found a Way to Foster Growth During the Pandemic



Customer Overview

BUSINESS NAME

Physique 57

INDUSTRY

Fitness

LOCATION

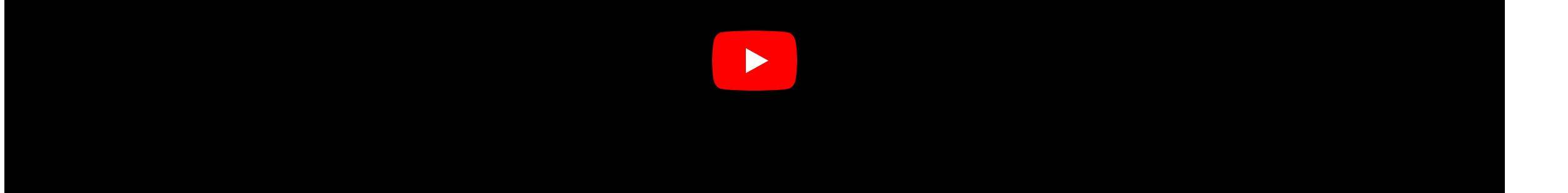
New York

FOUNDED

2005

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

9



In the 1990s, the New York City fitness scene included big-box gyms and postage-stamp-sized yoga and pilates studios. There was no real in-between. Fitness and fun didn't exist in the same converted loft overlooking SoHo. At least not until Jennifer Maanavi, a former Wall Street professional, and her business partner Tanya Becker, a professional dancer and fitness instructor, opened the doors to **Physique 57** in 2005.

Both dancers growing up, Maanavi and Becker met at one of the few barre studios in Manhattan in the late '90s. "When I found barre fitness back in the late 90s, it was fun, safe, and effective. It's dynamic. And for me, women all across the world should have access to barre exercise," says Maanavi.

When the studio closed, Maanavi and Becker saw an opportunity to establish an intimate and personal fitness experience of their own. The first Physique 57 studio debuted on the eighth floor of an art gallery building a few blocks from Central Park with no signage and a long waitlist. Within two years, the brand took boutique fitness global with locations in Dubai and Asia.

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Then 2020 reared its ugly head. Seemingly overnight, everything changed. When the pandemic hit in March, the fitness industry stopped in its tracks. Studio owners everywhere scrambled to adjust to the new virtual reality. Here's how Physique 57 not only weathered the storm—but thrived.

When the status quo shifts, the strong adapt

Amid unimaginable change, Maanavi knew one thing for sure: she wanted to offer her clients the same experience at home as in the studio. "Our clients have been logging into Mindbody for decades—and I wanted to keep that experience," she explains. "When they log in to their live classes through Mindbody, it's the same system they use for their in-person classes." There's a special comfort in familiarity.

But it wasn't as easy as simply flipping on a webcam and ring light. Up until March, Physique 57 only offered pre-recorded videos. "To convert a 15-year-old brick-and-mortar business to a virtual-only one took a tremendous amount of effort," explains Maanavi. "But with Mindbody, we're able to offer high-quality live classes from the studio. For us, that was game-changing."

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People are also working out more during the pandemic—five, six, even seven days a week. Studios that adapt to virtual reap the benefits. For Maanavi, the Physique 57 community is stronger than ever: "When we look through the roster of clients taking classes, I'm seeing names from decades ago coming back. Clients that moved out of New York City can finally get back to a real class with teachers and two-way communication." The tremendous effort paid off.

Focus on the virtual experience

Despite the dizzying array of video conferencing platforms, Maanavi wanted to uphold her brand's boutique fitness experience. "I didn't want to put Physique 57 on a 'work from home' platform," she says. "Building a successful business isn't just about creating a great product. It's also about creating an integrated and supportive community for your clients." And she's able to do just that with Mindbody.

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To create the best experience possible, Maanavi expanded her top priorities to include her employees and clients—as well as her service providers. "I wanted to deepen the relationship with the providers we already have," she explains. "By strengthening my relationship with Mindbody, I can provide a seamless experience for my clients." The partnership makes it easier to communicate and establish real connections through the camera.

Physique 57 joined the **Mindbody Virtual Wellness Platform** in May 2020. Since then, they continue to add new clients while staying true to their brick-and-mortar roots.

In-person will return—but virtual isn't going anywhere

If you ask Maanavi, virtual fitness is here to stay. "We'll be using this virtual platform forever. I'll never go back to being a brick-and-mortar business only," she says.

Clients from cities worldwide log in to Physique 57's live classes every week—and many plan to stick around even when their local studios resume in-person. The pandemic opened a new world of possibility. Studios can connect with communities that weren't accessible before. And clients can connect with studios from anywhere in the world.

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"I don't think it's even an option for studios to turn off their virtual platforms when studios open again because then you're closing the door on the world into your studio," says Maanavi. And for some people, the virtual experience is even better than in-person.

Change is an opportunity to innovate

The pandemic has been eye-opening for studio owners and their clients. As brick-and-mortar doors closed, virtual windows opened. A new world revealed itself. "It's been a learning experience and we're much, much stronger as a result," says Maanavi.

Change presents challenges. But it also presents opportunities. In Maanavi's case, an open mind and willingness to adapt paid off. Her business is thriving. She's reconnecting with long-lost clients. And she has a new virtual platform that will continue to add revenue forever.

"2020 for every business—no matter where you are, no matter what product you're offering, what service you're offering—it was the year of the pivot. It was a year of open-mindedness and trying new things," Maanavi concludes.

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