



Strava club builds community spirit



What started out as two small running and cycling clubs for the London office at the start of the pandemic has now expanded to be a community across much of the Firm – as the initiative's founder EMEA Chief Operating Officer Nick Salmon explains.

"Initially, we simply wanted to do something to connect people while we were working remotely," he says. "For many people, running and riding was also a way to escape lockdown, get some exercise and help manage their mental health."

"When we started the clubs, I honestly expected them to run for a couple of months before we closed them, but it soon became clear they were here to stay."

Word spread fast and, within weeks, colleagues from other offices asked to join. They included Head of Operations, Germany, Jana Weidig of the Frankfurt office, who quickly got involved and sourced a range of White & Case-branded running and cycling gear, including baseball caps, beanies and cycling jerseys.

The clubs celebrated their two-year anniversary in March and now include around 308 cyclists and runners from 32 offices.

The Firm has two global clubs on Strava, an app that tracks individual performance via GPS data and allows members to share pictures and progress updates. This includes activities completed outside and on popular fitness apps such as Peleton, Zwift and Wahoo.

Nick says: "One reason for the success of the groups is that we provide weekly updates, inspiring photos from people's runs and rides, and acknowledge those who've achieved great feats or made it onto weekly podiums."

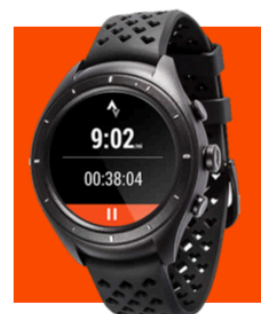
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"We try to feature different peoples' photos in our updates each week, so everyone is included. It's so impressive and inspiring to see what people achieve outside work. Besides their physical achievements some members of our clubs have also shown their amazing photographic talent."

"We have members around the world in nearly all of our offices, including a lot of members in Manila, where they continue to be very active."

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NICK SALMON, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, EMEA



The groups have often been used to raise money for good causes with one of the first being a seven-day challenge that saw the office compete against other UK-based law firms to clock up the greatest distance to raise money for Breast Cancer Now.

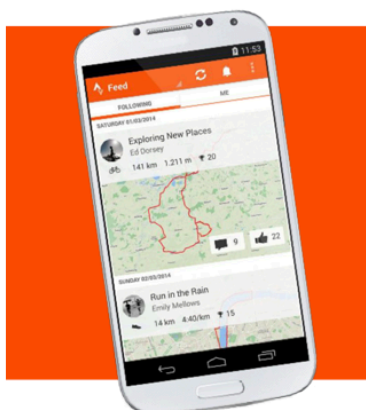
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NICK SALMON, WHITE & CASE
STRAVA CLUB FOUNDER

Since then, members have completed several individual challenges including Aida Zhakina's participation in the Kazakhstan Marathon and Eitan Goldberg's 100km ride from Miami to Key Largo for Bike 4 Friendship to raise awareness and funds for children and young adults with disabilities.

“Being a member of the club has been brilliant for me. I’ve got to know people across the Firm that I’d never have met otherwise and it’s been good meeting up and riding together.”

JAMES CHILDS, OPERATIONS
ENGINEER, LONDON



Nick and Jana completed a London to Paris cycle ride last year, raising £6,000 for Place2Be, which was doubled to £12,000 by the Firm.

The total included more than 100 donations from club members.

Jana says: “One of the most memorable moments of that challenge was when a colleague from our Paris office heard we were nearing the finish and got a train out of the city at 6am that morning to join us for the final 100km of the ride.

“That shows the team spirit that’s been created by the clubs.”

The clubs have also helped people improve their physical fitness, with London-based Infrastructure Operations Engineer James Childs transforming his lifestyle to become one of the groups’ most active members.

He says: “If anyone had told me I’d become a keen cyclist before lockdown I wouldn’t have believed them.

“I hadn’t cycled for years and my health had suffered as a result, so I’d put on a lot of weight. And, like a lot of people, I found the isolation of the Covid-19 pandemic difficult.

“But seeing all the pictures of colleagues all around the world out cycling really inspired me and I decided to join the club.”

Since then, James has ridden an estimated 6,000 miles. He’s combined his cycling with being an NHS responder, delivering food and supplies to people in need during the pandemic.

He also raised money for a cause close to his heart. He says: “My wife, Abena, had breast cancer a few years ago and 10 members of the White & Case Strava team cycled 3,500 miles in a week to raise money for Breast Cancer UK.

“Being a member of the club has been brilliant for me. I’ve got to know people across the Firm that I’d never have met otherwise and it’s been good meeting up and riding together.”

If you’d like to join either of the Strava clubs, simply download the app for free and search White and Case Global Runners or White and Case Global Cyclists in your Strava account. Or just email Nick or Jana for help at nick.salmon@whitecase.com or jweidig@whitecase.com

Nick says: “The clubs are free to join and aren’t going to be ending anytime soon. They’ll continue as long as people are active and interested, so we hope to see more of you riding and running with us in our clubs in the future.”





STRAVA

STRAVA CLUB MEMBER EITAN GOLDBERG