



EUROPE: UNITED KINGDOM

What are the most significant global issues facing us today?

Global warming: finding ways to stop harmful practices that make things worse, and finding ways to cope with its effects; the shift of global wealth and development; the rise of China and India as economic powers and the BRIC as influencers on the world stage. Their cultural influences and differences mean that what has worked in developed mature markets may not necessarily work in the new up-and-coming markets.

Changes in income patterns, including: the rise of the very wealthy around the globe; the lowering of wealth and expectations of income improvements in the middle class; the increase in people living in poverty in developed countries; the rise of the middle classes in emerging economies.

Changes in demographic patterns, specifically: the aging society in some developed nations; the rise in longevity; declining fertility: the lowering of birth rates in developed countries and no change of birth rates in developing countries.

Shifts in health issues; diseases of aging societies, of wealthy societies and of white collar and sedentary lifestyles, in particular obesity and type-2 diabetes.

What do you see as the main innovations happening around the world, those which are game changing and/or disruptive?

Social networking and mobile applications on smart phones and touch computers (e.g., iPads). Both allow brands to interact directly with their customers anytime, anywhere, giving them the ability to target them individually.

Advances in the arena of preventative medicine and genetic research are creating spaces for innovation to speed the path to prevention, treatment and cure for a number of life-threatening illnesses.

What do you see as the main innovations in the spa/wellness industry (existing and future)?

New modalities: cross-disciplinary spas, combining holistic and medical spa services.

Social networking and mobile technology: companies using both platforms effectively in order to understand, target and communicate with their customers.

Modern technology working hand-in-hand with holistic wellness: Well-versed spa and wellness customers are increasingly going back to holistic methods to maintain their health and fitness but they demand technology to diagnose their condition before they embark on their program of treatments, and to demonstrate the results afterwards. The technology will give them the evidence that proves it worked, as everyone seems to need this in today's society.

What do you see as the greatest opportunities/challenges for the global spa and wellness industry?

Affordability: Providing affordable wellness solutions for individuals and corporations.

Corporate wellness: Engaging and partnering with corporations so they come to believe in, provide or subsidize alternative wellness solutions to their employees in order to motivate and reward, and to prevent high turnover and absenteeism.

Recognition by governments, companies, insurance providers and individuals that preventative health and alternative therapies make economic sense.

Embracing social networking and mobile technology as per the previous question.

Skepticism: The lack of understanding of and widespread confusion about alternative and integrative therapies can stop people from availing themselves of treatments. The Spa Evidence Portal (www.spaevidence.com) launched at GSS 2011 has made a giant leap in providing a centralized place to discover and understand alternative treatments but there is still a long way to go.

Accommodating and catering to men's health: Spa is still predominantly seen as a woman's indulgence.

What are some practical ways for businesses to create a climate for creativity and innovation?

Set a vision that includes innovation. People give you what you ask for; if you don't ask, you often don't get.

Demonstrate that you value innovation by rewarding it and not punishing any attempts that fail. Innovation means some failure is inevitable.

Dedicate time and incentives for innovation. Make the space for both incremental development and disruptive up innovation. For example; a global technology company gives employees 20 percent of their time to do their own thing and be innovative. Another has a good governance award that rewards people who identify things the company does that wastes time. They also have a "Just Do It" award that rewards people who saw an opportunity that may not have been in their daily job description, and did something to exploit it usefully.

Create cross-functional and cross-level teams that can look at an issue with multiple viewpoints.

Go offsite on occasion with the intent to generate ideas.

Finally, ensure that some of the ideas do see the light of day. Nothing kills creativity more than not trying new ideas or launching new products.

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