



Industry Briefing Papers 2016

NORTH AMERICA: UNITED STATES

1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to spa, wellness, wellness travel or well-being?

Many articles continue to appear in top US magazines and papers such as: 7 Wellness Travel Trends to Watch in 2016, which hit the US News and World Report earlier this year. The article actually quoted the Global Wellness Institute statistics. The insight from this article, which I think is particularly relevant, is: "Once marketed at high-end spas, wellness services are ever-expanding in hotels, airports and leisure destinations across the globe. And with a growing number of health-focused initiatives, it probably comes as no surprise that interest in wellness tourism is steadily climbing."

What I am really loving is this notion of democratization of wellness and that it is no longer an elite proposition. Yes, there are plenty of headlines touting the latest wellness destinations and global tourism options, however, this grass roots interest in wellness at home is exciting and a phenomenon that requires serious consideration. I believe this renewed interest in wellness is rooted in two interrelated and yet diametrically opposite trends: (1) Demanding Hyperdigital Lifestyles and (2) the Search for Meaning and Conscious Connection.

In the late 1980's when I was finishing my master's in business and organization behavior from Loyola University in Chicago, I was fascinated by the research of several great thinkers in the area of Sociotechnical Systems - (STS) in organizational development is an approach to complex organizational work design that recognizes the interaction between people and technology in workplaces. The term also refers to the interaction between society's complex infrastructures and human behavior. In the 80's, I predicted technology would one day outpace the human capacity to adapt to change. Today, we see an increasing number of stress-related disorders and disease as humans' attempt to cope with this new hyperdigital reality. At the same time, organic systems will always find ways to recalibrate and return to a "natural" state of equilibrium. I think people are naturally doing that today. What is interesting though, is that the very technology that keeps us up at night is the key to fostering even more profound connections around the globe and a world consciousness that may have taken centuries to evolve prior to the introduction of cellular technologies. In short, I believe the world is at the threshold of one of the most spectacular eras of our time - an era where personal, interpersonal, intercultural

and global well-being can be the common ground where we finally relate, overcome ideological differences and foster a new consciousness to save our planet and its earthly inhabitants.

2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think is the most important development in your country for each of the following wellness sectors:

Spas:

Spas are leading the way in wellness programming and helping lodging on and other tourism sectors get on board.

Beauty:

When someone looks good, they feel good, and when they feel good, they achieve better results in life, at home and at work. It is time beauty explores its contribution to wellness.

Fitness:

Fitness leads the way in integrating technology into a well lifestyle and pushes other sectors to do the same.

Nutrition:

The physical aspects of wellness – fitness and nutrition easily connect. Yet in the US, nutrition seems to lag the world as statistically we remain the least healthy and educated omnivores on the planet.

Wellness Tourism:

The blend of eco and wellness tourism continues. Hurried lifestyles prompt a resurgence of the “weekend wellness warrior” and “episodic experiential wellness” – short wellness bursts planned over a period of time.

Wellness Communities or Real Estate:

I love to see this trend which is ahead of its time, but which will be a leading integrator of global wellness in the not-so-distant future.

3. Our theme this year is “Back to the Future.” What do you feel is your country’s most significant contribution to what is now a global wellness economy?

Integration of wellness into fast-paced and urban lifestyles – community gardens, yoga studios, healing arts day spas, the resurgence of wellness in the workplace, free aerobics/yoga in the park over lunch hours, popup food trucks offering seasonally and local...and the many other purveyors of “entrepreneurial convenience goods and services.”

4. What do you feel is the biggest challenge in your country when it comes to growing the wellness economy?

We have not grappled with the fact that the era of “doing more with less” is killing our workforces’ capacity to thrive, contribute and make meaningful and productive contributions to the organizations within which we work.

5. While no answers are right or wrong, we would like to know what you feel is the difference - if any - between the terms/concepts of “wellness” and “well-being” in your country.

I don’t see a distinction between the two. In keeping with the theme: Back to the Future, wellness holds the key to our historical roots in the movement, whereas well-being is the contemporary nomenclature which doesn’t carry the same tired stigma of wellness. Well-being is a reiteration to which today’s consumer and participant more easily relates.

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