



# THE AMERICAS: UNITED STATES

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## **What are the most significant global issues facing us today?**

Given that the origins of the spa industry stem from the use of thermal and mineral springs for “health through water,” the most significant global issue facing us today and tomorrow may be the dwindling fresh water resources and poor access to usable water. Human health is quite literally in peril regarding life-sustaining water, with estimates for 2025 placing two-thirds of the world’s population in “water stressed” conditions. So it would make sense for us, as spa professionals, to be involved with the conversation.

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

The explosion of technology created to connect us virtually to one another has been a game-changer in almost every industry and way of life. We are trading face-to-face interactions for high volumes of electronically-facilitated relationships. The repercussions of that shift will be significant, varied and plentiful, with both positive and negative effects on society. The spa industry is in a unique position to counteract some of the negative effects of this with our high-touch, high-quality, human-to-human contact.

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

The rapid expansion of spas and wellness centers focused on the middle-market in the US is changing the shape of the industry here, and of overall societal opinions regarding the need for proactive health, wellness and pampering activities as part of everyday life. Membership-based programs that include regular massages, spa treatments, and wellness products and services are driving demand from the mainstream public and seem to be leading the way in a new model of profitability for spas.

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

With many of the world’s top killers identified as predominantly preventable diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and others related to obesity, stress, tobacco use, and diet, the global spa and wellness industry has the opportunity to become the primary source of information about healthy lifestyle practices, stress management, and the holistic nature of true health and wellness.

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

Ensuring management attitudes are aligned with this goal and implementing policies to support this, such as open-door access to managers, regular team meetings and activities, and on-site/off-site events, are most important. Providing staff with all the tools and resources necessary for their operations at all times helps to release them from simply coping, so that they can feel comfortable and confident in coming up with innovative practices. Encouraging time spent in nature and more playful activities may also be effective for enhancing creativity within an organization.

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