

HEALTHCARE

Technology, personalization defining next frontier of wellness: Ipsos

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U.S. adults are looking for the “next big thing” in managing their health. Image credit: Ipsos

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

Research firm Ipsos recently delved into what is shaping the upcoming landscape of health.

From the integration of technology and wearables into daily wellness routines to the effect that climate change is having on fitness, Americans are considering new ideas when deciding how to take care of themselves. Ipsos explores the shifting attitudes, innovations and marketing ploys that are bringing about these major changes, outlining the transformation at a recent event.

The April 9 webinar, “[What the Future: Wellness](#),” featured Matt Carmichael, editor at “What the Future” and head of the Ipsos Trends and Foresight Lab. Snippets from interviews with various healthcare and fitness leaders were also included in the programming.

Trends on the horizon

Millions of Americans are taking fresh approaches to their physical and mental wellness, and more era-changing trends are on the horizon.

Mr. Carmichael brought this up in his introduction to the webinar. He outlined how technology is playing a large role in young people’s practices, the ways that social media is turning fitness on its head and talked about the balance that modern consumers are trying to strike between the tried-and-true basics and futuristic health.

Ipsos presents its [What the Future: Wellness](#) webinar

The speaker went on to share that 36 percent of U.S. adults between the ages of 18 and 36 trust computer programs or AI to handle their medical data.

This is a growing demographic as the world gets younger. This spectrum is seeing major shifts and compounded trends, such as the increase of college degrees, and the delay of marriage and bringing children into the world.

Therefore, being a 20-something adult is not what it used to be. Mr. Carmichael painted the picture during this section of the program, revealing that people are focusing on their wellness during this time of being young, single and unattached.

Changes are occurring on the other side of the spectrum as well.



Luxury brands outside of wellness, such as Auberge Resorts, are already weaving elements of the industry into their footprints to benefit from the health wave. Image credit: Auberge Resorts

"Now, say we live longer and our lifespans continue to grow, after a brief pandemic blip," Mr. Carmichael said.

"Say all these trends and technologies continue to allow us to live longer and healthier," he said. "The retirement age will likely continue to creep up, but many of us will find a future with a much longer period of employment or retirement.

"Could that develop into an entirely new, or at least improved and prolonged, life stage, and what would that look like?"

Mr. Carmichael went on to say that due to these shake-ups, new opportunities are emerging for businesses. Many are debuting financial services focused on the emerging retirement landscape, health supplements, lifetime medicines, customer experiences that revolve around health and edible offerings that align with the latest diets.

He listed three things that are driving the future wellness industry: climate change, consumer wellness and personalized medicine.



In December 2023, beauty group L'Oréal announced it was acquiring Danish research firm Lactobio in a bid for holistic and data-backed healthcare. Image credit: Lactobio

"Climate change poses a significant threat to global wellness through a range of complex and interconnected effects," Mr. Carmichael said.

He discussed how rising temperatures are spreading chronic health issues, disease and death, while unpredictable weather is doing likewise while also affecting food systems. He also mentioned climate anxiety, which is disproportionality affecting young adults and could be a good issue for brands to address if they want to connect with their audiences.

Speaking to the second driver, Mr. Carmichael shared that the spreading of fitness technology, nutritional services and mental health apps is sparking a more proactive approach to health management consumers want to be involved. For example, he revealed that 57 percent of American adults between the ages of 18 and 34 think health wearables will help them adopt healthier habits.

He said that brands that are selling evidence-based tools will have an important role to play in all of this.



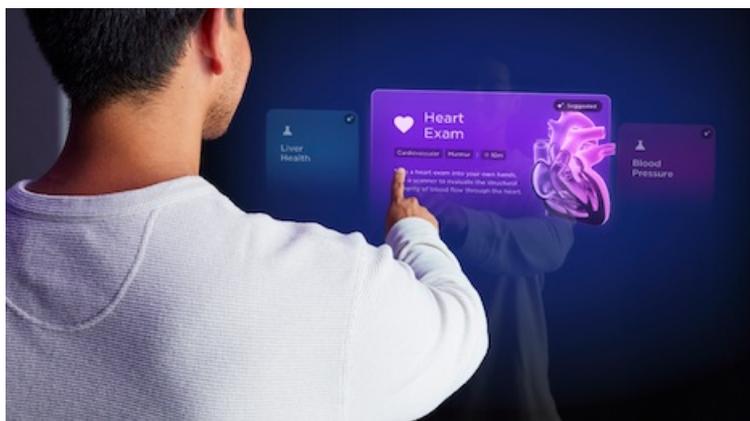
Wellness stands as the next frontier for many other outside industries, such as luxury travel, which is increasingly adding the concept into marketing. Image credit: Marriott International

Finally, the speaker talked about how Americans want to unlock better wellness outcomes by utilizing personalized medicine. Though still a young field, companies that consider genetics, ethnicity and individualized contexts could be in a strong spot in the current market.

Businesses that offer targeted and effective therapies are especially leaning into the moment. AI can help accelerate their push, aiding in the predictive aspects of the analyses.

However, the use of technology must be cautious, Mr. Carmichael said. He outlined how American adults have a complicated relationship with the digital and virtual world.

Though 26 percent of U.S. adults feel that technology has affected their mental health positively, 21 percent feel it has been negative. Baby Boomers feel neutral about it, with two-thirds of them believing that technology has not impacted their mental health at all.



Young people want to utilize technology to its highest potential, but are wary of the way it harms their mental health. Image credit: Havas

Millennials, on the other hand, are in more dire straits, as one in three think their mental health has been harmed by technology.

"Brands can't address or act on every mental health issue," said Amy Cargill, senior director of the online communities team at Ipsos, in a featured interview included in the webinar.

"But whether they want to develop products and services that resonate with all ages, or simply want to avoid alienating certain audiences, a nuanced and intergenerational understanding of how factors in mental health vary across generations is critical to

making people feel seen,” she said.

The luxury lens

Many in luxury have been applying the practices suggested by the Ipsos team already in a welcoming of the future.



Wellness features such as Klafs' home sauna systems are now integral pieces of affluent's residences. Image credit: Kohler

It has been reported that the in-home fitness technology market was valued at \$63 billion in 2023, increasing 15 percent annually with the help of AI. As adoption become more mainstream, it is clear that consumers want to build their own miniature holistic healthcare centers on their own turf ([see story](#)).

Smart products are largely considered to be the next frontier, with luxury brands now offering infrared sauna blankets, electromagnetic field-emitting mats and wellness fixtures fitted with user controls ([see story](#)).

Tech-enabled treatments are now found across high-end spa spaces outside of the home as well, allowing affluent to receive care from experts ([see story](#)).

American luxury fitness club Equinox has been touting all of the latest trends in wellness. In its latest revelation, the company announced that it is specifically centering personalization.



Function Health's package includes more than 100 tests. Image credit: Equinox

Partnering with U.S.-based lab testing platform Function Health, its gyms will soon offer services that track bodily functions and processes using biological data ([see story](#)).

As top earners are currently spending hundreds of billions of dollars on wellness every year ([see story](#)), they are certainly a lucrative group to market toward. Based on the Ipsos webinar and the data shared, brands that take an approach that honors the individuality of the demographic are positioned to rise above the rest.