

# spa business



## Anna Bjurstam

*leads a host of industry experts in celebrating  
Spa Business' 20th birthday and the  
evolution of our inspirational sector*

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### BIRTHDAY MESSAGE

*I'm a regular reader and fan of Spa Business. It's the go-to magazine for spa professionals. It ventures past the superficial to help us all stay attuned to global happenings and wider sector movements*



## Ingo Schweder

GOCO Hospitality

### What are your pivotal career moments?

I was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer in 1993. The wellness industry was still in its infancy, but I turned to yoga, meditation, detoxing and macrobiotic cuisine/targeted supplements in my two-year survival battle. I travelled the globe meeting academics such as Marc Cohen, Gerry Bodeker and Robert Thurman, learnt about the vast cosmos of complementary alternative modalities and experienced environments such as banyas, rasuls, hammams and bathhouses. The cancer-related downtime and healing regimes ultimately changed the direction of my career – for which I'm grateful.

### What key innovations can you identify?

There are so many! Those focused on mind and emotional health, tapping into binaural and solfeggio therapies, are particularly interesting. Examples include Mindsync, the Biohacking Orb, Sensync's Vessel and Gharieni's Welnamis.

### What do you wish had been invented?

The use and application of technology for diagnostics is already having a tremendous impact on personalised healing journeys. These often enable consumers to take charge of their own health. However, there's a gap for devices

Residences at Glen Ivy Hot Springs are an example of the flourishing wellness real estate movement



and wearables to offer real-time advice to counterbalance the strains of everyday life – ‘your stress levels are too high, you need to take 10 minutes out to meditate’, ‘cut down on your carbs today, you’re not doing enough to burn them’.

#### **Who are the biggest industry influencers?**

Gen Z continues to have a profound impact on wellness and leisure travel. They’re more concerned about sustainability in travel, accommodation and products than others.

They want elevated experiences off the beaten track and they’re big advocates of social wellness, shirking traditional spa experiences centred around solo, quiet-based activities.

#### **What business models are the most exciting?**

Wellness real estate ventures, centred around healthy lifestyles, are prospering and influencing the wider communities around them. Our project in Appenzell, Switzerland, for example, will open early next year.

Traditional spas are being disrupted with the rise of social wellness clubs such as



*There’s a gap for wearables to offer real-time advice to counteract daily stressors*

Remedy Place, Next Health, The Well and the one we’re developing in Four Seasons Bangkok. Based in cities, they’re leading the charge in making preventative medicine more accessible with their biohacking and high-tech modalities such as hyperbaric oxygen, cryotherapy, IV infusions, photobiomodulation and pulsed electromagnetic field therapy.

#### **How can the industry realise its true potential?**

I applaud a more democratised global wellness economy. But I would like to see operators offering ‘sister’ models with a more accessible price point to ultimately offer wellness to all.

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