



Conclusion

Although this book has mainly provided a pinpointed and practical guide to spa management, the summaries of existing research as well as the interview data from 45 spa practitioners help to position the work in a broader, global context. For a spa manager, it is important to have a clear awareness of international trends and changing lifestyle habits, even if they are working in the same spa for years, even decades. Generational shifts are happening every few years and the cultural background of guests may vary, especially if a location attracts international tourists. Whereas middle aged, professional women used to be the core market for spas, these days, it is just as likely to be couples or families with children. This can create new challenges requiring complex offers that target more than one segment simultaneously. In addition, individuals may wish to receive personalised and co-creative packages and treatments. In this age of social media and consumer reviews, being complacent is not an option. As consumers become more experienced and knowledgeable about spas and wellness, they will be more and more demanding and will benchmark their spa visit against previous experiences. Technology may help or hinder spa development as customers struggle with the dilemma of facilitating their lives through constant connectedness (e.g. lifestyle and wellness Apps to help manage their nutrition or fitness regime), but they may also be in desperate need of disconnecting and experiencing 'digital detox'. People are travelling more than ever at the same time as lamenting about the lack of sustainability of the planet. They may be keen to offset their carbon emissions and assuage guilt in greener spas. At present, veganism is growing at an unprecedented rate, which has implications for spa cuisine. Spa managers must remain alert and responsive to these challenges and contradictions.

This book has provided invaluable advice about how to create excellent customer service in spas through the use of touchpoints and engaging experiences. Spa employees are absolutely central to this process and their attitude and delivery will be the determining factor, regardless of how well the spa is designed physically. However, an holistic approach is essential which begins during the information provision and pre-booking phase and extends long after the visit is over with the creation of loyalty and encouraging repeat visitation. It is clear that research is needed to fully understand the spa's target markets and the motivations and profiles of the guests. More extensive research should be carried out on specific segments as well as on cross-cultural differences. This information is imperative for marketing and promotion of spa services, as well as experience design and creation.