SPECIAL REPORT

Health and Wellness: Who's Your Target Consumer?

Contents

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Introduction

Ask a dozen people what health and wellness (H&W) means to them, and you'll likely get a dozen different answers. That's partly a reflection of how diverse and dynamic the H&W market has become over the years and how the ways that people define H&W are constantly expanding. But it also has a lot to do with the individual's relationship to their own physical and mental well-being.

With that in mind, in late 2023 L.E.K. Consulting set out to develop a comprehensive view of H&W consumers' preferences and behaviors. We began by surveying over 1,800 adults across the U.S. about their engagement in a range of lifestyle and shopping activities — from exercising and eating right to using personal care products and recovery-related services like cryotherapy. Here's what we discovered.

Seven archetypes comprise H&W consumers

Our analysis of attitudes, preferences and spend in various H&W subcategories revealed seven H&W consumer archetypes.

1. **Health enthusiasts (10% of H&W consumers). Health enthusiasts** see H&W as essential to their identity. They participate heavily in all aspects of H&W, from fitness to mental health and everything in between, and still feel like they could be doing more.

   Health enthusiasts spend the most time per week getting active across several different exercise modes. They take an intense, holistic approach to wellness and are very interested in alternative wellness (think sleep or sexual wellness).

2. **Trendspotters (16%). Trendspotters** stay highly active and up to date on the latest and greatest trends in H&W. They tend to be younger and relatively new to exercise, and they place a strong emphasis on appearance. **Trendspotters** are also heavy adopters of digital fitness and wellness video content.

3. **Holistic contents (12%). Holistic contents** take a balanced approach to wellness, such as simultaneously tending to body and mind or paying attention to what goes in and on their bodies. They're confident they're doing everything they can to stay healthy.

   Of all the archetypes, **Holistic contents** emphasize healthy eating and supplements the most. They see skin care as one of the biggest components of H&W (probably because more of them are women) and are generally uninterested in trendy wellness practices.

4. **Traditionalists (14%). Traditionalists** are just that. When it comes to H&W, they mostly focus on exercise and diet and display little interest in newer or holistic approaches.

   Traditionalists spend more than the average amount of time working out. They're confident in their fitness regimen and commitment and have little interest in trendy H&W products or services. Underscoring the last point, **Traditionalists** have among the lowest overall average monthly spend on H&W.

5. **Average Joes/Janes (21%). Average Joes/Janes** take a shotgun approach to H&W, dabbling in a wide range of categories but not focusing on any area in particular. They

generally aim to take off a few pounds rather than achieve significant weight loss. Healthy eating and limiting alcohol intake are not overly important to this cohort.

6. **Aspirational strugglers (16%).** While they lag in most H&W areas, **Aspirational strugglers** wish they had the discipline to do more. Most are trying to lose some or significant weight, which is their primary goal when exercising. But a quarter of the segment doesn't exercise, and for most of the rest, the chief form of activity is outdoor walking.

   Aspirational strugglers have below-average interest in, or awareness of, most alternative wellness areas (like mindfulness or sleep regimens).

7. **Wellness apathetics (11%).** H&W is a low priority among **Wellness apathetics**, and they have little desire to change. This archetype averages the least amount of exercise per week, and nearly half have either never worked out or stopped working out. Those who do work out are mainly looking to improve their ability to do everyday activities, though 1 in 6 are not even monitoring their weight.

   The interest that **Wellness apathetics** have in other areas of H&W, like nutrition or beauty and personal care, is similar to their interest in exercise: very low.

New/emerging dimensions of H&W can highlight key differences between archetypes

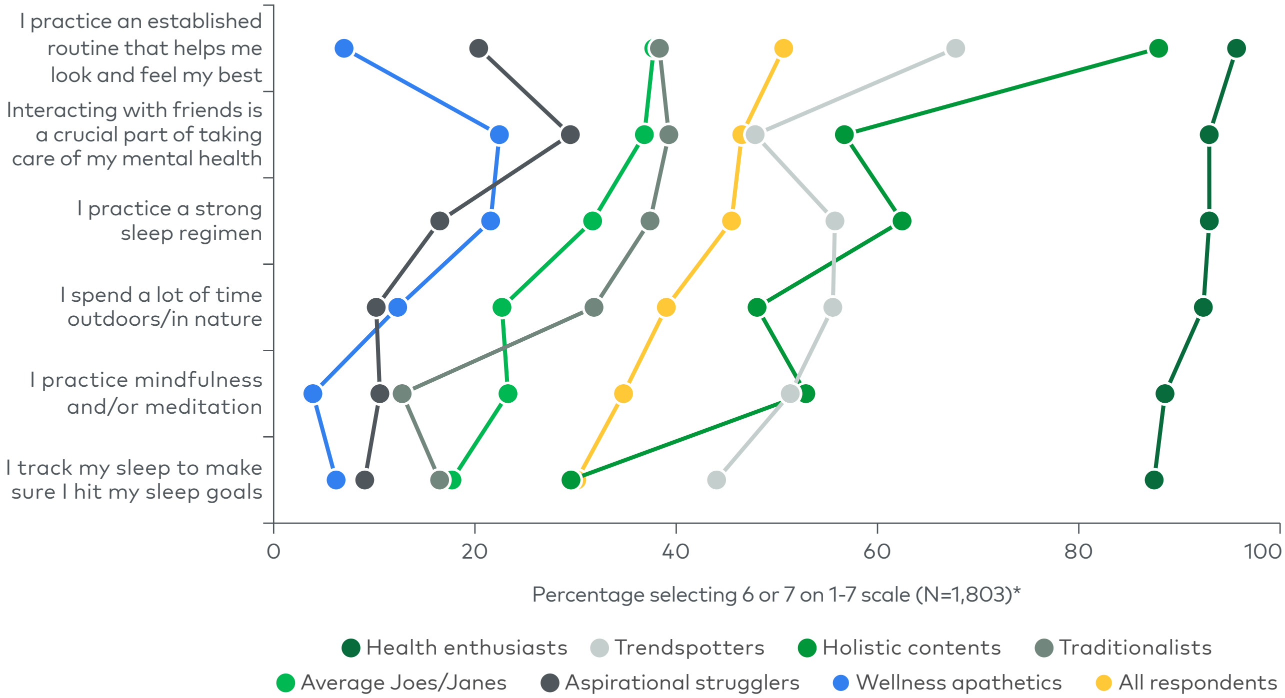
The H&W landscape is expanding to include new ideas previously not considered a part of H&W, making it increasingly important for companies/brands to know how to speak to their consumers about these topics. As the definition of H&W has broadened, consumers have developed increasingly distinct interests, values and behaviors. We've selected five hot-button topics that are driving evolution within the H&W landscape to examine the differences between archetypes.

Mindfulness and sleep have emerged as key newer elements of wellness

As consumers have broadened the definition of wellness, mindfulness and sleep have become increasingly critical to some archetypes' wellness routines. These consumers are intentional about prioritizing activities like spending time with friends and meditating to focus on mental health. Sleep is also treated with purpose; these consumers track sleep goals and actively look to improve their habits to maximize the quality of their sleep (e.g., bedtime routines, diet). It is important for companies and brands to be more expansive about how they talk to consumers regarding wellness, as these two components are essential to understanding the full picture.

Health enthusiasts place the highest emphasis on mindfulness and sleep, with the vast majority in strong agreement with various statements on its importance (see Figure 1). Besides **Health enthusiasts**, an above-average share of **Trendspotters** and **Holistic contents** are following suit.

Figure 1
Agreement with select mindfulness/sleep statements, by archetype



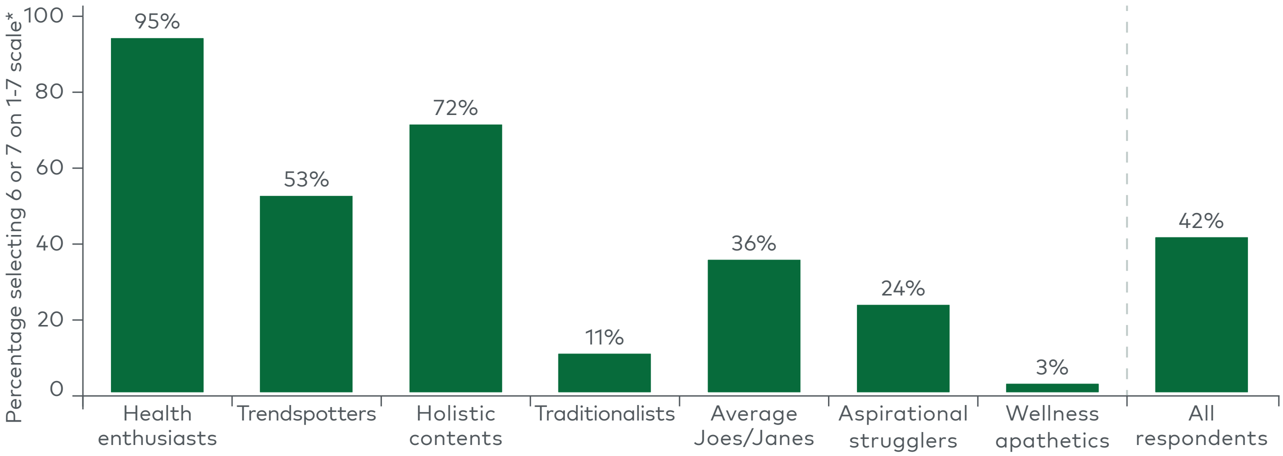
*Survey question: We'd like to know the extent to which you either agree or disagree with each of the following statements; please rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 7 means "strongly agree"
Source: L.E.K. survey and analysis

Nearly half of H&W consumers view skincare routines as essential to their overall H&W

Beauty and personal care, and specifically skincare, is also increasingly critical to overall H&W. This is an expansion of the physical aspect of H&W beyond traditional fitness and diet, with consumers seeking to keep their skin healthy as a broader wellness effort. In fact, nearly all **Health enthusiasts** strongly agree that having an established skincare routine is an essential part of their overall H&W (see Figure 2).

Holistic contents are well above average — second only to **Health enthusiasts** — in the importance they place on having an established skincare routine as part of their H&W. **Trendspotters** join **Holistic contents** and **Health enthusiasts** as being above average in agreeing that skincare is important.

Figure 2
Agreement that an established skincare routine is a critical part of overall H&W, by archetype



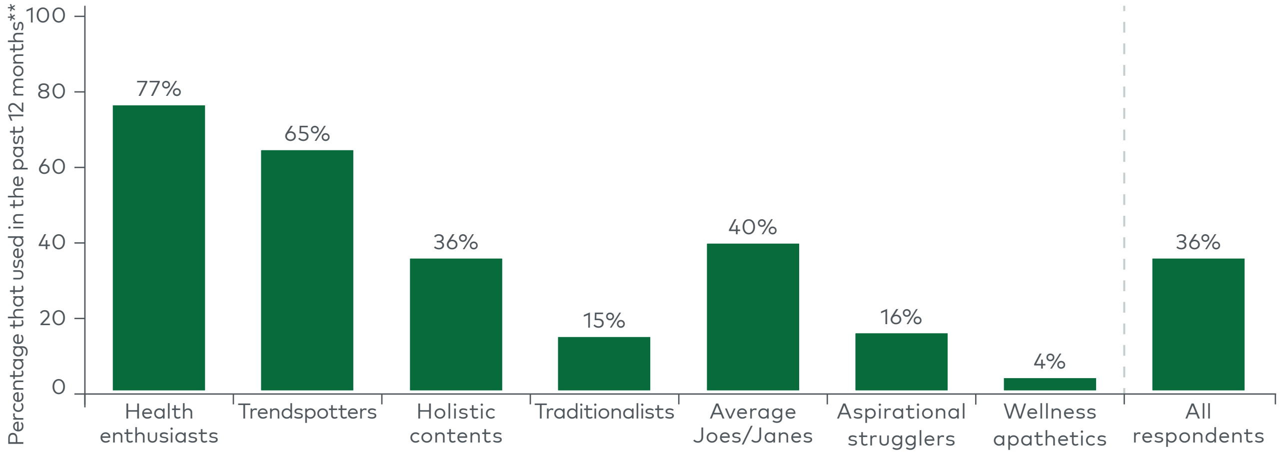
*Survey question: We'd like to know the extent to which you either agree or disagree with each of the following statements; please rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 7 means "strongly agree"
Note: H&W=health and wellness
Source: L.E.K. survey and analysis

Digital fitness and wellness content is gaining steam, with Average Joes/Janes above average in their embrace of it

A key growth trend is the use of digital content. We asked consumers who exercise how much of their exercise time is spent using digital fitness and wellness content (see Figure 3).

Three-quarters of **Health enthusiasts** say they have engaged with digital content in the past year. But **Trendspotters** aren't far behind at 65%. **Average Joes/Janes** are above average here, with 40% having used digital content in the past year, while **Holistic contents** are in line with the average respondent at 36%.

Figure 3
Digital fitness and wellness content usage,* by archetype

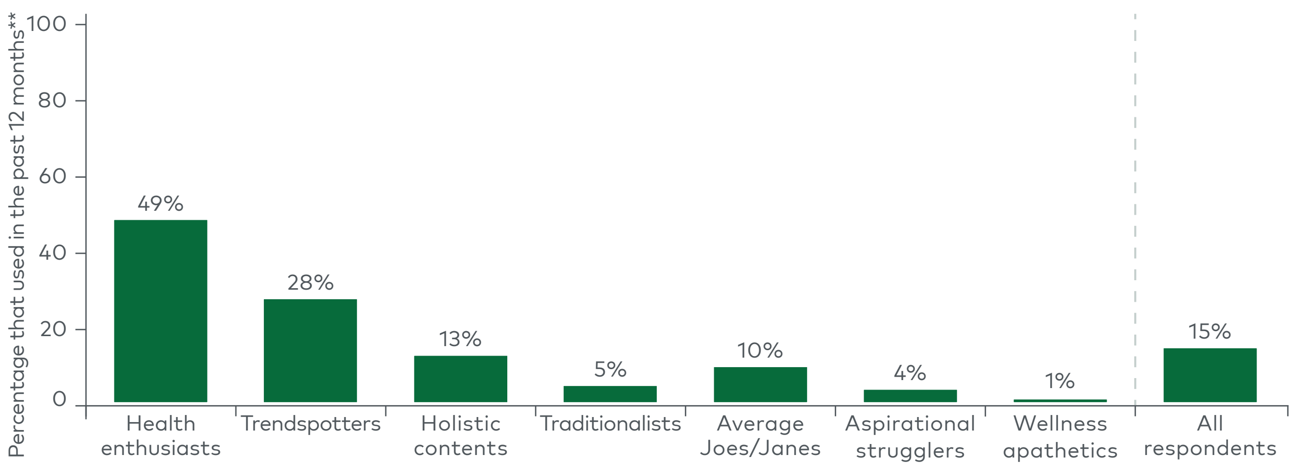


*Percentage that spends >0% of their weekly time exercising using digital fitness and wellness content
**Survey question: You previously indicated that you typically spend [XX] hours each week exercising; approximately what percentage of this time do you spend using digital fitness and wellness video content?
Source: L.E.K. survey and analysis

Consumers are beginning to explore the leading edge of H&W

Products and services like cold plunges, cryotherapy and infrared saunas are at the leading edge of H&W — so new that only about half of **Health enthusiasts** say they're familiar with them (see Figure 4). **Trendspotters** and **Holistic contents** round out the top three archetypes that know about recovery and health optimization services.

Figure 4
Recovery and health optimization services* usage, by archetype



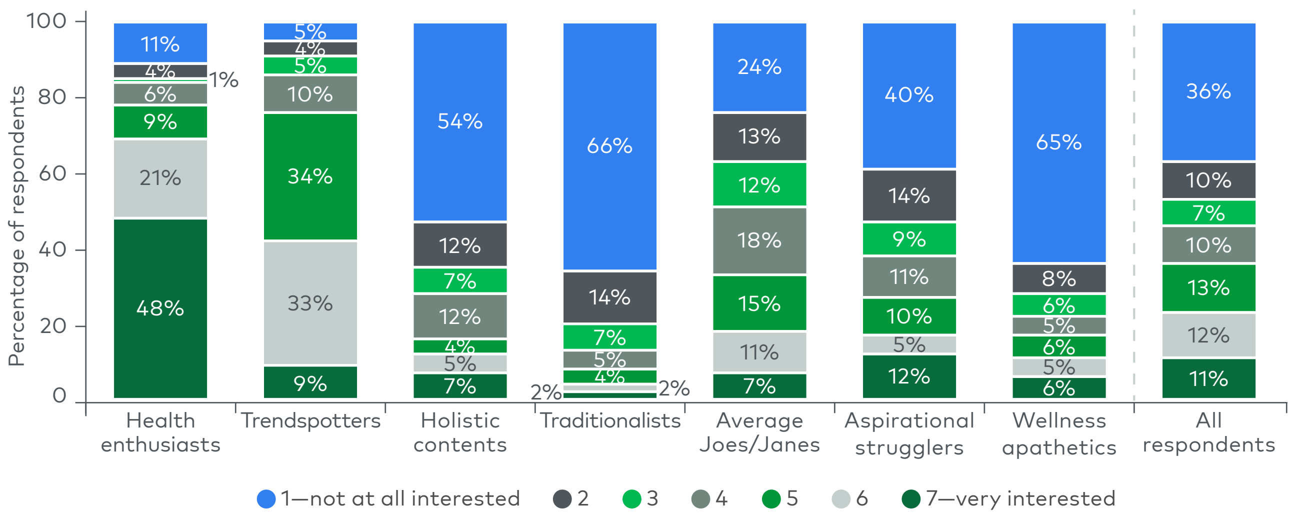
*Includes cold plunges, cryotherapy, red light therapy, infrared saunas, IV drip therapy, IM vitamin shots, peptide therapy and assisted stretching
**Survey question: How familiar are you with each of the following recovery and health optimization services?
Note: IM=intramuscular; IV=intravenous
Source: L.E.K. survey and analysis

The appeal of weight loss drugs like Ozempic depends on each archetype's attitude toward H&W

Unsurprisingly, given that H&W dominates all aspects of their life, **Health enthusiasts** have the most interest in using prescription drugs to control their weight (see Figure 5). **Trendspotters** are next — they're always looking for the next big thing, so new drugs are attractive to them even as they may scare off many **Traditionalists**. **Holistic contents** also register a lower level of interest in weight loss drugs, but that may reflect the confidence they have in their current H&W behaviors.

Figure 5

Level of interest in weight loss drugs, by archetype



Survey question: We'd like to know how well each of the following statements describes you; please rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means "does not describe me at all" and 7 means "describes me very well"

Source: L.E.K. survey and analysis

Ten fast facts about H&W consumers

1. No matter how active they are in H&W, the **vast majority** of consumers still wish they could be doing more than they currently do.
2. About 35% of all H&W consumers state that they lead a **well-balanced and holistic life** (i.e., doing their best to consider the mental, physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual aspects of their lives). The share is highest among millennials and Generation Z at 40%.
3. The key distinction between the most- and least-engaged H&W consumers is the **presence or lack of an established routine**.
4. H&W consumers report exercising roughly seven hours a week, on average, with over 70% of that either at home or outside. Both the average and total **time exercising** at home or outside has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic hit.
5. Across all archetypes, the **top reasons for exercising** are to lose weight, feel good in one's body and reduce health risks.
6. Only about 30% of H&W consumers are content with their **current weight**. Over 50% are trying to lose some or significant weight. Women (60%) are more likely than men (50%) to be trying to lose weight. At the same time, men (15%) are more likely than women (10%) to be trying to put on muscle.
7. Over 55% of H&W consumers place a heavy focus on **limiting alcohol** as part of being healthy.
8. Half of women strongly agree that their **skincare routine** is a critical part of their H&W, compared to only 30% of men.
9. While 30% of H&W consumers practice **meditation** or **mindfulness** to a large degree, less than 10% have purchased meditation-focused apps in the past 12 months.
10. **Sexual wellness** is a high priority for some 35% of H&W consumers, including about 50% of millennials. Approximately 10% have purchased sexual wellness products in the past 12 months.

A new, more in-depth understanding of H&W customers

There's no single way to define H&W from the consumer perspective. Even so, a multifaceted examination brings different segments of the H&W consumer base into focus. Using our proprietary consumer archetypes, brands in the H&W space or in adjacent industries can segment their markets more effectively and paint a clearer picture of their consumers, effectively pinpointing the products and services their customers want the most.

We can guide your brand's direction to prioritize offerings and analyze expansion opportunities within the H&W space, driving your strategy of the future.

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