

VOLUME 20 NO.7 | JULY 2019

Residential Systems

ResidentialSystems.com

Spotlight on Power
Management

Selling Lossless Audio

Custom Distributors Guide

Get Well(ness) Soon

Veteran integrator Jan Vitrofsky works with manufacturer Delos to introduce its health & wellness product to the CI channel.



HEDsouth
HOME ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN

FL: 954-929-2700 | CA: 310-728-0179

www.HEDsouth.com



Riding the Wellness Wave

Delos looks to the custom install market to introduce a new level of service for clients that revolves around enhancing their health through improved air, water, and light quality.

By Anthony Savona

We have always presented customers with the allure of a better life through technology — through shared AV experiences, through convenient and simple home control, through security and peace of mind, and so on. Those are all valid ways to improve a client's daily life, but we are on the precipice of being able to give them not only a better home life experience, but a healthier, possibly longer one, too.

Wellness is certainly not a new concept — it's

not even new in technology — so there is already an understanding of what it means to clients. However, years of unfulfilled promises and fraudulent claims have left consumers justifiably wary.

But a company named Delos is looking to change all that with a residential product named DARWIN. And it is using the custom integration channel to do so (as well as as builders and interior designers).

Meet Delos

Delos debuted in 2009 with the goal of providing a healthy environment for the places we live, work, sleep, and play. After seven years of research and initiating dialogues with thought leaders in the building sciences and health sciences, it launched the WELL Building Standard in 2014, and the International WELL Building Institute to deliver it. The WELL Building Standard is a global rating system focused exclusively on the



The Delos DARWIN automatically controls the lighting in the home so that it mirrors the sun. Photos: © Delos Living LLC. Used here with permission.

ways that buildings, and everything in them, can improve people's comfort, drive better choices, and generally enhance health and wellness. In 2015, Delos teamed with the Mayo Clinic to launch the Well Living Lab, which researches how indoor environments can contribute to health and well-being. Delos then turned its focus to residential environments.

"I think there was a natural evolution [to the home] because the company is focused on using health sciences to improve the environment that we're spending 90 percent of our time in — predominantly commercial spaces and in homes," says Anthony Antolino, chief commercial officer at Delos. "Americans are thinking about how their homes can



The Delos DARWIN control tablet. Photo: © Delos Living LLC. Used here with permission.

“You meet with a customer and somebody asks you what's cool and new in technology. And the response should be, 'How about solutions that help you improve your and your family's well-being? How about having it done passively without you needing to do anything? How would you like having your home respond with cleaner air and water, and have the lights help you maintain hormonal balance during the day and at night before you go to bed.' **”**

—Jan Vitrofsky

perform better for them. It's on their minds, but they don't know how to activate their home in a way that can be a catalyst for improving their health and well-being."

Based on its more than seven years of research, Antolino adds, Delos "will help mitigate the environmental concerns in the home across air pollutants, water contaminants, and the impact that light has on our bodies by incorporating circadian lighting."

When Delos approached the commercial space, they worked mainly with builders, architects, and designers, but while those pros also fit in the company's approach to the residential side, the CI channel is poised to play a significant role.

"Integrators are spending an enormous amount of time in the home, and their businesses have evolved from from doing high-end audio/video to full technology integration," says Antolino. "It was a natural fit for us to empower the integrators to bring a valuable solution like home wellness to their customer base."

To navigate the world of residential integration, Delos needed a consultant who knows how CI pros think and work. They found that in Jan Vitrofsky, owner of HED South in Hollywood, FL. To call Vitrofsky a veteran is an understatement — he has been in this business for almost 40 years. He has seen his share of trends come and go, but he believes wellness is one that will come and stay.

"The concept of wellness in the residential space has surfaced because people are becoming more aware of all the different things associated with health," says Vitrofsky. "More and more people are seeing the term. For instance, Whole Foods is about wellness, and when you go into Whole Foods, you'll see marketing and branding associated with wellness. You go into an Equinox gym and they're talking about wellness. You go to a spa and they're talking about wellness. Consumers are becoming more aware that there



Jan Vitrofsky, owner of HED South in Hollywood, FL, and pictured here with his son, is an industry veteran who believes so much in the potential of wellness in his business that he is working with Delos to integrate them into the custom channel. Photo by Sonja Garnitschnig.

are things that can be done to have a better quality of life."

Vitrofsky acted as a representative for Delos in the system integration market. He is also a member of the HTSA, and he brought Delos CEO

Paul Scialla to HTSA's Fall Conference last year to introduce the community to the concept of selling and installing wellness. The reaction was a line of members waiting to talk to Scialla after his presentation.

Vitrofsky understands the excitement. "We've been selling shading and lighting forever, so there really hasn't been a fundamentally new offering or narrative to speak with customers about other than what room do you want music and what room do you want the TV," he says. "This is a whole new dynamic. This is a whole new thing for this channel to talk about."

How It Works

The Delos product designed for the luxury home market is called DARWIN Premier. While Delos offers a few levels of product and service, DARWIN Premier operates at a level CI clients

Integrators are spending an enormous amount of time in the home, and their businesses have evolved from from doing high-end audio/video to full technology integration. It was a natural fit for us to empower the integrators to bring a valuable solution like home wellness to their customer base.

—Anthony Antolino

have come to expect.

“DARWIN is a home wellness intelligence network, so it is a combination of proprietary software developed by Delos and third-party hardware that is carefully curated from the best in the market across air filtration systems, water filtration systems, circadian lighting, and a number of other solutions,” says Antolino. “We find products that we think will help create an environment designed to improve the human condition, and we have an internal lab team put them through very rigorous review to make sure that they meet criteria based on the latest science. If they do, then they go into our product database and can be used when specifying a project.”

DARWIN can operate as a standalone system, or it can work with an existing Crestron automation system, with integration with other platforms such as Savant arriving soon. “We’re intended to be the wellness layer inside a smart home automation system — or, in the absence of a smart home automation system, then we can stand alone and inform the wellness products that are important to the clients’ lives,” adds Antolino.

With DARWIN Premier, Delos will work with the integrator or architects and designers to integrate the DARWIN network without making alterations to the layout and design plan. The company requires access to the schematics, but will design a system that works with all the existing ducts and electrical systems — something sure to make those camps happy.

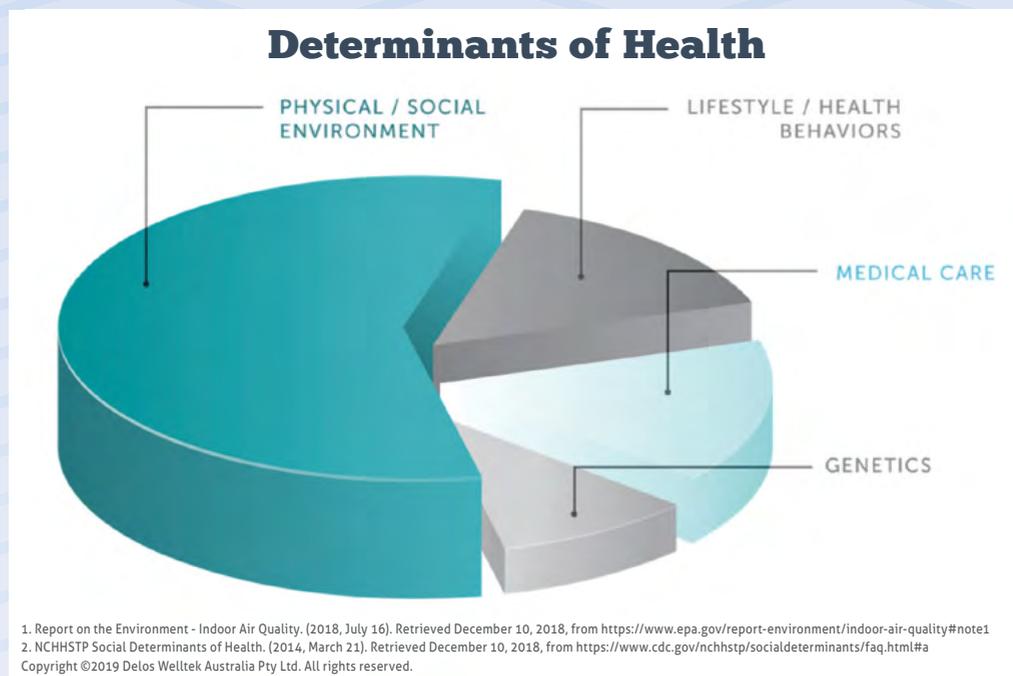
The CI Connection

As a product, it is clear where DARWIN fits into the residential integrator’s wheelhouse — it involves areas already covered by the industry, including automation, shading, and lighting. But does it make business sense? Vitrofsky certainly thinks so.

“You meet with a customer and somebody asks you what’s cool and new in technology,” he says. “And the response should be, ‘How about solutions that help you improve your and your family’s well-being? How about having it done passively without you needing to do anything? How would you like having your home respond with cleaner air and water, and have the lights help you maintain hormonal balance during the day and at night before you go to bed.’”

“And all of this for a very small delta shift in price of what you would already be doing to do your home.”

Well, when you put it that way.... However, Vitrofsky does admit that wellness is a tough



benefit to demo to a client in a showroom. “It’s difficult to demonstrate other than going into a place that has the air filtration in it, where you would notice the difference *immediately*,” he says. “And if somebody pours you a glass of water from a filtered tap, you could taste how great it is. But for the most part it’s just verbally describing it to them to get their interest, except for maybe the lighting portion, which you can demonstrate — you could show somebody the circadian lighting and let them know how it is essentially mimicking the sun. That’s very effective.”

Also effective is presenting the perk that DARWIN Premier clients receive: membership to the Mayo Clinic Preferred Response Program, which provides 24/7 remote access to world-renowned Mayo Clinic medical experts, contacts to the global network of Mayo Clinic physicians and alumni, pre-trip planning services (which include travel health risks and immunizations), global medical evacuation services, and an in-home medical kit.

As further incentive for integrators to begin selling DARWIN systems, Delos has a certified dealer program. “It is constructed from a financial perspective to work with the channel so that the integrators can buy the solution and enjoy market rate margin such that they can then resell it to their end users,” says Antolino. “We’ve got a very specific program for them and we are training new companies every single month. We have a two-part training program: the first part is sales and marketing training for the sales teams; in the second part, we empower the integrators to become product experts on the DARWIN

system, including product installation and commissioning.”

As far as maintenance goes, the DARWIN software can be updated remotely. The water and air filters will require annual replacements, which can be part of a larger recurring monthly revenue plan that provides additional access to the customers.

Being Part of the Wellness Wave

Both Antolino and Vitrofsky believe that once customers get a taste of what a wellness ecosystem can do for them, they will never not have one, which leads to plenty of opportunities for custom installers in a variety of installation types and budgets. According to Antolino, the Delos plan is to one day have a wellness system in every home — not just luxury ones. “Our mission as a company is to help improve the health outcomes of all,” he says. “Our product suite is designed and developed in a way that can be sold to mass market at the entry level, right through to the mid-market and up to the ultra-luxury residences.”

Vitrofsky believes that wellness will become a part of every installation he does. “If offered at a price point they can afford, nobody is going to say no to solutions that help provide a better quality of life,” he says. “Right now we’re dealing with the early adopters in the upper end of the category, but as technology moves very quickly, we’re going to see a shift where this becomes part of everybody’s life.”

Or, as Antolino puts it, “A home is not smart unless it’s healthy.” ■



DISSOLVING THE BARRIERS BETWEEN YOU AND TECHNOLOGY

At HEDsouth, our goal is to unite people with modern technology and thereby enrich their lives. Technology for the home and office should respond to your desires and perform beyond your expectations. Our approach to home entertainment, wellness and automation systems is to make them as simple as they are cutting edge. Imagine having a touch screen remote control or smart device with settings that fit your preferences and lifestyle. These features are hallmarks of our music, video, wellness, lighting, shading, climate control and electronics design. We believe the perfect system is the one that offers endless enjoyment without effort. And it's all done with a commitment to quality that can only be found in one place in Southern Florida and Southern California.

HEDsouth
HOME ENTERTAINMENT DESIGN

FL: 954-929-2700 | CA: 310-728-0179

www.HEDsouth.com