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What Is Well Washing?  
And How Our Home Technology Industry  
Can Combat It

**Education remains the best safeguard against encroaching well washing, and all professionals have a part to play.**





**CEO and Founder of HEDsouth,  
Jan Vitrofsky.**

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Vitrofsky is on the forefront of providing the most innovative and advanced tech devices for both new builds and renovations that focus on delivering healthy air, water and light.

February 14, 2022  
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Photos by: HEDsouth, Pexels

When a product or service becomes popular, it is not uncommon for opportunists to make attempts to “cash in.” Often, as soon as a trend becomes a buzz word, we see the term proliferate marketing and selling messages, ads and more. Unfortunately, many well-meaning but uninformed legitimate entrepreneurs sometimes get caught in the crossfire. And so it is in the Wellness Industry and well washing today.

It is an exciting, growing category, but also comes with some of these aspects described. Deceptive or uninformed companies can take advantage of the wellness boom by applying the terms “wellness” to nearly any item and often inappropriate products and services.

Some sellers today are misusing “wellness” in much the same way the term “natural” has been misused over the years. The word “natural” is not defined or regulated by the FDA, although it is regulated by the USDA. Wellness is considered still in its infancy considering where it will likely go, and therefore, it is open to lack of data on goods and services.

There is a term we use for those who misrepresent a product or service as if it were truly a wellness product and that is “well washing,” a term borrowed from the green washing committed by those who spread disinformation and misinformation so as to foster an environmentally responsible public image.

## Explosive Market Growth is the Motivator

The motivation driving this false marketing is as strong as it is obvious. The wellness economy represented 5.1% of global economic output in 2020, according to the Global Wellness Institute, amounting to \$4.4 trillion in 2020. Their prediction for future growth is bullish; they project 9.9% average annual expansion, with the wellness econ-

omy reaching nearly \$7.0 trillion in 2025. Other organizations place the estimate even higher.

## Wellness Technology and Education Are Intertwined

We must understand that many companies are trying to leverage the word wellness and capitalize on the pandemic to offer customers their perceived ‘healthy products.’ It is important that we, as custom technology integration companies and leaders, come to the table with as many facts, data and education that are available to us.

When wellness technology specifically is misrepresented, the consumer suffers most. And it can negatively affect the integration community, our reputation and technology products that we offer. As we know, when these things become suspect, the harder it may become to discuss or even raise the topic.

The best way to guard against fraud and to protect consumers from wellness-washing is through careful education. Since 2017, it has been my personal mission to educate both buyers, trade partners and legitimate integration firms on what true wellness products entail and where they can gather facts. Wellness education begins with a definition that can be used to judge (in the sense of qualify) products and services described as wellness. I offer the following as our definition:

*A wellness product sustains or improves the physical and/or mental health of an individual in tangible ways. This begins with the basic requirements for human life: clean air, fresh water, appropriate lighting, and extends to adequate sleep, comfortable temperature control, suppression of pathogens and access to an around-the-clock healthy environment.*



## Are There International Standards?

Standards do exist, but not enough people are aware of them. For that reason, many illegitimate wellness claims go unchallenged.

For example, in the scrubbed-clean air category, EPA, HEPA and ULPA filter classes are defined by ISO 29463, a standard derived from the longstanding EN1822. Although the strict specifications are a bit difficult for the average layperson to easily deal with, the underlying point is more important: consumers and dealers should rely on well-established technologies, products and services that are based in science.

## Bringing Tangible Wellness to Your Business and Customers

Having been at the forefront of wellness since its very inception, we have been incredibly careful to choose qualified partners at HEDsouth. By collaborating with authentic

providers such as Delos, for example, we are able to offer our customers air, water, light, comfort and sound solutions — and all are science-backed products, strategies and technologies that create an experience to advance our customers' welfare. If you are not familiar with Delos, they offer a host of great data, testing information and white papers that are readily available to integration companies and their clients.

We have chosen to deploy Delos DARWIN Home Wellness Intelligence solutions because they are designed to help enhance energy, sleep and overall well-being, while also reducing indoor contaminants that negatively affect people's health. These are things that our customers want and respond to almost immediately. By offering Delos we provide our customers with wellness technology that is both state-of-the-art and scientifically valid. And, if asked, we share our own company-branded documents that come from the many Delos resources available.

Our team at HEDsouth has also found that the benefits of Ketra Lighting, a Lutron product, are easy for our customers to understand. Ketra delivers dynamically balanced lighting that

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coincides with the homeowner's circadian rhythm, thereby creating the right environment for daytime activities as well as rest and relaxation periods. This is quite easy to explain by bringing up the warm and cool lighting settings for various times of the day that are now available on most every cell phone.

We will see more companies come to the table with technology wellness products and services in the coming years. Delos and Ketra are just two examples of companies who have worked hard to have a foundation or testing and data behind their wellness solutions. Regardless of what products your business chooses, understand what data they have and what tests have been performed. This will help you be confident in your recommendations to customers.

An exciting part of having wellness solutions you can back yield great results. Our company was selected to provide robust wellness options to residents of Boca Beach House in Florida.

The technologies we offer in this large community include a lighting, climate and wellness control system tuned to match the human body.

In addition to rhythm-balanced lighting and shades, we featured systems that intelligently and efficiently target unhealthy air as well as customized on-site water testing through a third-party laboratory. These are elaborate, science-based systems that not just have the word wellness stamped on the box. We can share data on these systems that are used not only in homes, but in a special class of hotels and commercial buildings worldwide.

## Let's Educate Together!

When you become educated about wellness technology as a technology company, builder or architect, you will be able to specifically deflect the market encroachment of wellness-washing. You can learn a great deal just by visiting [delos.com](https://delos.com) and [ketra.com](https://ketra.com) or by reaching out to me at [jan@HEDsouth.com](mailto:jan@HEDsouth.com).

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