



I've spent more than
US\$2.5 million on
reversing my age

Dave Asprey, founder, Upgrade Labs

Just back from Dave Asprey's Beyond Biohacking Conference, now in its 14th year, there's no denying the entrepreneurial ecosystem he's built around the concept of human optimisation.

More than 4,000 delegates and 140 exhibitors descended on the event to explore everything from hyperbaric chambers and lymphatic compression suits to supplements.

Asprey, who claims to have coined the term biohacking, is perhaps best known for Bulletproof coffee, but is also the founder of Upgrade Labs – his high-tech health, wellness and fitness concept.

Launched in 2021, there are now nine Upgrade Labs franchises across the US and Canada, with an aim of at least 30 (some reports suggest 100 more) and its first international site will be in Dubai.

He declares he's spent more than US\$2.5 million (€2.19 million, £1.87 million) on reversing his age and that he's lost 100lbs in weight and today boasts only 4.8 per cent body fat.

Dave Asprey calls himself the 'father of biohacking'





His personal claims are bold and not without sceptics, but distract from a more interesting story – how he’s turning biohacking into a scalable business model that challenges traditional spa conventions.

Selling outcomes

Upgrade Labs is a technology-driven environment combining recovery, performance, cognitive support and body-composition analysis. Its offering spans red light therapy, cryotherapy, AI-powered strength and movement sessions, PEMF, neurofeedback, compression and metabolic training.

Individual ‘Upgrade’ services, available to non-members and members, last around 10-30 minutes and start at around US\$36-US\$45 (€31-€39, £27-£33).

Yet Asprey insists the technology itself isn’t the point. “The spas losing ground are still selling standalone treatments: a massage, a facial,” he says. “Those are great, but can you prove they’re making you younger? The spas thriving in the longevity economy are selling outcomes and have data to back them up.”

I don’t want to trawl through a whole menu of massages, I want a spa to tell me what I need

It’s a philosophy he’s expressed before, saying he doesn’t want to “trawl through a whole menu of massages”. Instead, he’d rather a spa simply tell him what he needs, how long it will take and how success will be measured.

This doesn’t mean spas should overpromise or stray into medical territory. But it does suggest opportunities to frame services around observable outcomes – from post-flight recovery and stress resilience to mobility, sleep support or skin health – rather than simply listing treatments by time and technique.

Measuring what matters

If outcomes are the destination, data is how Asprey believes operators should get there.

An Upgrade Labs experience begins with assessment and

measurement. Its Cell Health Analysis provides information on body composition, hydration and other biomarkers before recommending technologies or protocols.

“What that looks like in practice is before and after measurements on inflammation markers, HRV, cortisol, recovery scores,” says Asprey. “When a client can see what a protocol did to their biology, the value is self-evident. That’s what keeps people coming back.”

Asprey says results from the Cell Health Analysis are interpreted by a trained member of staff who explains them to a client face to face. These are used to create a personalised 12-week protocol, mapping out the technology and modalities based on their specific body composition and goals. Unlimited monthly rescans are used to track change over time.



Members stay for 9.6 months on average and visit 3.5 times a week

Over an average three-month client journey, he reveals there's a 0.3lb increase in muscle mass, a 2lb decrease in body fat, a 0.0014 decrease in inflammation markers and 0.0079 phase angle rise – an indicator of cellular health and body composition quality. The clientele skews older, so maintaining or slightly increasing muscle while losing fat is a more meaningful outcome than raw numbers suggest. Similarly, any incremental phase angle is significant, he adds. Overall, the goal is healthy ageing.

Most spas won't want – or need – to invest in sophisticated diagnostics. But the principle is transferable. Lifestyle questionnaires, skin analysis, sleep assessments, body-composition testing or wearable data can all provide a starting point for more personalised recommendations and follow-up.

When a client can see what a protocol did to their biology, the value is self-evident

Retaining clients

Asprey explains that the Upgrade Labs approach is as much about retention as technology. Guests who can see progress have a reason to return, while staff have a framework for recommending the next step. The one-off treatment becomes an ongoing programme.

Recent numbers show that memberships account for 81.8 per cent of revenue across all sites, with a la carte services, packages

and retail products making up the rest. Membership prices vary across locations, but range from US\$99-US\$179 (€86-€155, £73-£133) for the basic Foundation tier and US\$199-US\$329 (€173-€285, £147-£244) for the Evolve mid-level offer and go up to US\$269-US\$449 (€233-€389, £199-£333) for Amplify, the top tier. Active members stay for 9.6 months on average and visit 3.5 times a week.

Less effort, better results

Perhaps the most commercially interesting aspect of Asprey's philosophy is efficiency. He's previously argued that the goal isn't simply to improve results – it's to improve them while reducing the time and effort required from the client.

If members achieve better outcomes in less time, they spend

less time occupying equipment, utilisation increases and operators can justify premium pricing because the focus is on measurable value rather than minutes delivered.

That thinking underpins Upgrade Labs' business model, where adaptive technologies and recovery modalities are designed to work in relatively short sessions. Tools such as The AI Strength Trainer adjust resistance as the client moves, for example, and The Metabolic Trainer is designed to help the body use oxygen better.

Typical session times last 20-40 minutes and in the Performance and Recovery categories they're about 22 minutes on average. Asprey says "most clients only need to come in two to three times a week to see results, versus the longer, more frequent sessions a traditional gym routine typically requires".

For spa operators, the implications are intriguing. Express recovery programmes, targeted performance packages

and membership-based wellness journeys could all appeal to increasingly time-poor consumers. The question isn't whether every spa should become a biohacking centre, but whether efficiency and measurable outcomes should play a bigger role in the guest experience.

Technology and touch

One of the understandable concerns in the spa world is that

advanced wellness technologies could erode the human essence of the business. If guests are moving from one machine to another, where is the care and hospitality?

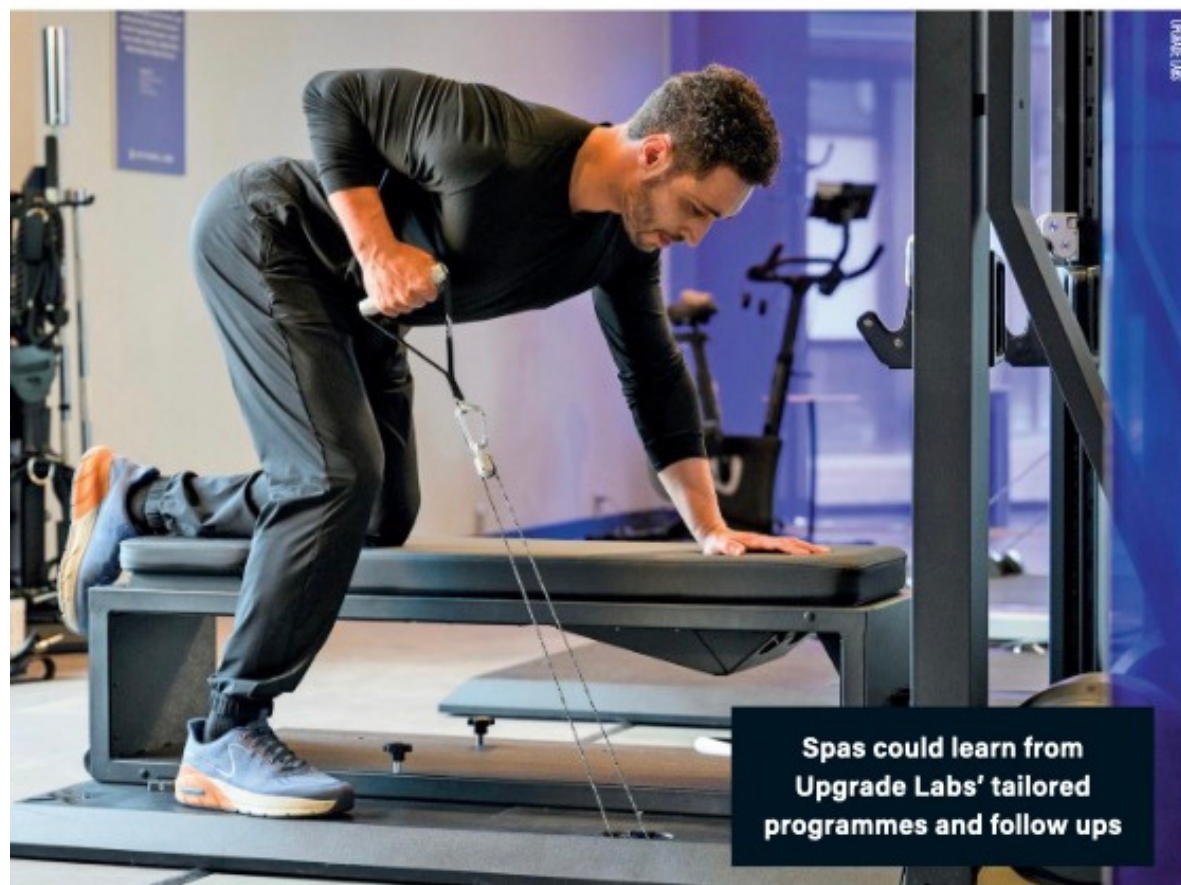
Asprey rejects the idea that people are something to be replaced. "Walk into any Upgrade Labs site and a knowledgeable human greets you, consults with you on your biomarker data and helps you understand what the tech is showing," he says.



Asprey takes centre stage at his 14th Beyond Biohacking Conference



The event attracted 140 biohacking exhibitors and 4,000 delegates



Spas could learn from Upgrade Labs' tailored programmes and follow ups



Cryotherapy is just one of the interventions available

The machine gives you precision and data and the human gives you context

"It's the machine that gives you precision and data and the human that gives you context."

That philosophy is perhaps where Upgrade Labs comes closest to traditional spas. The technology may provide the intervention, but people remain central to the experience. A therapist, aesthetician, wellness concierge or recovery specialist can interpret a guest's goals, explain the science, adapt the programme and provide reassurance in a way no machine can.

Asprey is equally clear that operators shouldn't invest in technology simply because it's fashionable. "At Upgrade Labs, we don't offer anything we haven't rigorously tested for efficacy. That's the standard," he says.

He continues: "Quality is important too. Not all red light therapy beds are effective. Not all PEMF works. At Upgrade Labs we source the highest quality brands and equipment that actually have data behind them that shows they

work. Spas owe it to their clients to do the same kind of research."

For spa operators considering new technologies, that's perhaps one of the most practical takeaways. Equipment should be selected not because it's the latest trend, but because it has a clear role within the guest journey, can be supported by appropriately trained staff and evidence and fits the commercial model of the business.

The winning blend

In conclusion, Upgrade Labs is not a spa in the traditional sense and many of Asprey's more ambitious claims will continue to divide opinion. But consumers increasingly expect wellness to be personalised, measurable and backed by evidence.

As Asprey puts it: "The winning blend is expert humans, community, and technology precise enough to show you exactly what's working." Whether or not operators agree, it's a conversation the spa industry can no longer afford to ignore. ●

Asprey plans to take the Upgrade Labs franchise global

