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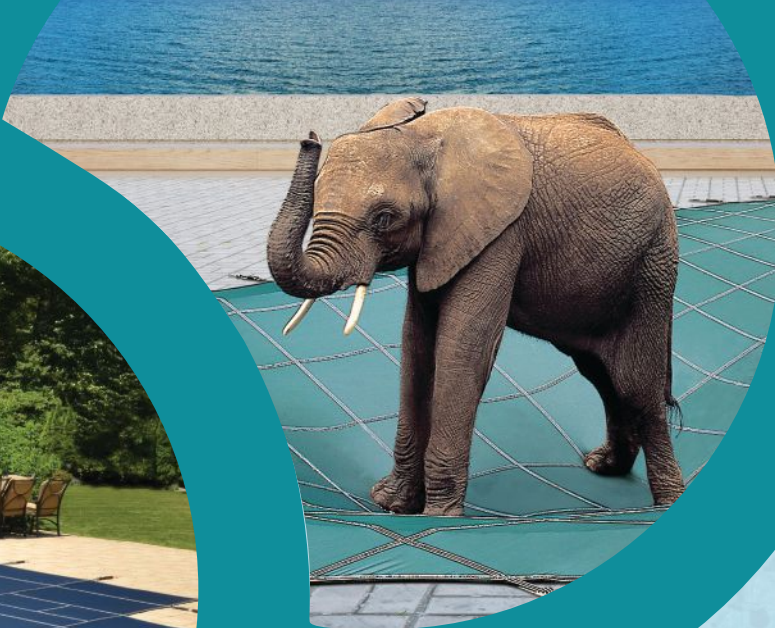


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Survey Says



Joanne McClain
Editor-in-Chief, PSN

A few years back, I confessed to being a survey junkie in my youth. They were usually quick and easy ways to express my opinion. But as I've grown older and my time has become more valuable, I've become more of a survey Scrooge.

Part of the reason, as I've mentioned, is time. It seems every online business interaction has a survey component attached at the end. In just the past hour alone, I've been inundated with requests to fill out half a dozen surveys requesting feedback for everything from a recent doctor's visit to how I'm enjoying a particular streaming music service or what I think about my last purchase of dental picks. Some web pages even require you to answer a survey question before you can access the page! Call me a curmudgeon, but this is extremely annoying.

Of course, I understand the reason for the proliferation in surveys. Market research, particularly conducting surveys, is a huge business in and of itself. According to ESOMAR, the global association for the research industry, the market generated approximately \$57B worldwide in 2021.

And the data culled from these surveys can be invaluable to supporting myriad business decisions, from company expansion strategies to inventory options to customer service. The ways in which survey data can inform are limitless.

But this data is only as good as the construction of the surveys they're gathered from — in order to yield the best possible data, it's important to keep your surveys clear, concise and

customized for your specific purpose.

According to Dr. Marisa Maio Mackay, director of Complete the Picture Consulting, a strategy research analysis firm, these three C's are key. Here are the questions Mackay says to keep in mind as you design your surveys:

Clear: What do you want to learn or find out about? From whom? How do you want to use the results?

Concise: Each question should be short. Use terms familiar to the respondent, and only ask about one aspect or feature at a time. Do not lead the respondent. Does the question help the company address the purpose of the survey? In addition, good flow — where the sections and questions follow a logical sequence for the respondent — is important.

Customization: If you need information on the same topic but from different stakeholders — for example, customers and employees — you must design separate surveys for those groups.

Of course, there's much more to the fine art of designing surveys. After all, there are entire companies out there whose sole area of expertise is to design surveys to help you get the feedback you need. But if you're considering deploying your own simple surveys to get started, I hope you find this helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Joanne McClain'.

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Watkins Wellness Acquires Sauna Maker

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO



Citing its intent to play a role in the wellness industry, hot-tub maker Watkins Wellness is in line to acquire a sauna company, entering that market for the first time.

The Vista, Calif.-based hot-tub manufacturer entered into an agreement to purchase Sauna360. The Finnish company produces traditional, infrared and wood-burning saunas, along with steam showers, rooms and generators. It primarily sells in the U.S. and Europe but has a global presence through its Finnleo, Tylo, Helo, Kastor and Amerrec brands.

Officials characterized it as a nat-

ural step in the progression of both companies. Formerly called Watkins Manufacturing, the hot-tub maker rebranded in 2016 to incorporate wellness in its mission and image.

“[The acquisition] is completely based on this notion that our north star or our vision is to position Watkins Wellness as the leader in the growing wellness market,” said company President Vijaikrishna (VJ) Teenarsipur. “Saunas or heat bathing has been the most natural wellness adjacency that we have looked at for quite a while now.”

Sauna360 was created in 2008 by the merger between long-time man-

ufacturers Helo and Tylo, with the former founded in 1919 and the latter in 1949. Sauna360 has approximately 180 employees located in Finland, Sweden, the U.S. and England.

“Sauna360’s business has grown in recent years, and becoming part of Watkins Wellness will further strengthen our capability and ambition to be a leading sauna player,” said Pekka Lettijeffer, President & CEO of Sauna360 Group.

Watkins sees a large opportunity for growth in the Sauna market, Teenarsipur added. “Even though the hot tub category is not a well penetrated one, if anything, saunas are much less penetrated in North America,” he said. “Even after the COVID bump, saunas see somewhere maybe a little north of 1%. For

the longterm we view this as a very robust growth category.”

Teenarsipur said it chose Sauna360 in large part for its establishment and standing in the market.

Though he said it is still too early to offer specifics on such things as synergies or the management team, he expected things to remain fairly unchanged.

“Overall we really like the playbook that Sauna360 is currently using,” he said.

At press time, the sale was expected to close sometime during the third quarter, pending regulatory approval.

Million Dollar Pool Design Challenge Open

The International Pool | Spa | Patio Expo, co-located with Deck Expo is now taking submissions for its fifth annual Million Dollar Pool Design Challenge.

Applicants are given a fictitious customer profile, which includes their aesthetic preferences and what kinds of features they want. Additionally a site is provided. This year's is set on the Intracoastal Waterway in the Miami Beach area. Designers are given a budget of at least \$1 million to create the pool of the fictional clients' dreams.

Five finalists will be chosen to receive a trip to the PSP/Deck Expo in Las Vegas, where they will present their de-

signs. One of these finalists is guaranteed to be a young professional aged 29 or younger at the time of submission. Attendees at the session vote for a grand-prize winner.

In addition to the trip, the grand-prize winner will receive \$10,000. Second place is awarded \$3,000; third \$1,250; fourth \$750 and fifth \$500.

The contest is coordinated between PSP/Deck Expo organizer Informa and pools designers Reid

Schindler and Mike Farley. To apply, go to themilliondollarpoolchallenge.com. The deadline is Sept. 21.

The PSP/Deck Expo takes place Nov. 13-15 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, with pre-show education beginning Nov. 10.



Heritage Enters Idaho

The national distributor

Heritage Pool Supply Group gained its first Idaho-based operation with the acquisition of All Iowa Pool, based in Des Moines. With this transaction, the distributor now does business in 30 states, with 18 brands and 110 locations.

Founded in 1947, Iowa Pool is run by Matt and Deanne Main, the latter of whom will continue to lead the operation, now as a part of Heritage.

Heritage, headquartered in McKinney, Texas, entered the pool/spa industry in 2021, when it began acquiring independent distributors to form a network of independent, local distributors that generally retain their original brands, operations and staffs. In its two years, it has undergone a rapid growth trajectory.

Waterco Acquires Davey Water Products

With a recent acquisition, Sydney-based pool and water-treatment equipment manufacturer Waterco says it has become the largest Australian-owned and -operated entity in the water industry.

Last month, the company announced the purchase of Melbourne-based Davey Water Products, a subsidiary of GUD Holdings, for \$64.9 million.

"The acquisition aligns with Waterco's long-term strategic vision of becoming a global leader in the water technology industry," said Waterco Founder, Executive Chairman and CEO Soon Sinn Goh. "It positions the company for sustainable growth and enables it to take advantage of emerging opportunities in the market."

ASP Expands Reach in First Half of 2023

America's Swimming Pool Co.

(ASP) expanded into six new territories from January to June. In the first quarter, it signed franchise agreements for the Chicagoland area and upstate South Carolina. In the second quarter, the pool/spa service company granted franchises to four new owners to service three Florida cities — Bradenton, Sarasota and South Shore — along with New Orleans.



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Access To Credit Tightens Across The Economy

The latest Senior Loan Officer Opinion Survey on Bank Lending Practices reveals banks plan to continue tightening for the balance of 2023.

BY ALI WOLF



The federal funds rate, the inter-bank lending rate set by the Federal Reserve, has increased from 5.25% to 5.5%, the highest level in 22 years. The Fed's intention in recent increases of the federal funds rate is to slow growth by raising the cost of borrowing to help reduce inflation back down to its target of 2%.

In addition to rate increases, banks can tighten credit standards to slow growth. Tighter credit standards combined with a higher cost of borrowing can cause consumers to pull back on spending for goods and services.

Given this backdrop, the Senior Loan Officer Opinion Survey on Bank Lending Practices (SLOOS) has become a top economic indicator to watch. The SLOOS captures changes to demand for and access to credit via the responses from 66 domestic banks and 19 U.S. branches and agencies of foreign banks. The most recent report, released in July, showed that access to credit is tightening across the economy.

The SLOOS also asked banks about their plans for future lending. Respondents reported plans to con-

tinue tightening for the balance of 2023, assuming the economy follows the consensus forecast. According to the survey, "the most cited reasons for expecting to tighten lending standards were a less favorable or more uncertain economic outlook, an expected deterioration in collateral values, and an expected deterioration in credit quality of commercial real estate (CRE) and other loans."

When considering the home building industry, the SLOOS tracks commercial and industrial (C&I) loans over time. We corroborate these trends with data from the NAHB on acquisition, development, and construction (AD&C) loans. Both the NAHB and the SLOOS data point to tighter lending standards in the construction industry. (See "Credit Availability: AD&C Loans" chart on page 20.)

While residential construction lending is not covered in the survey, residential loan access for consumers is covered. The July data shows lending standards tightened for all types of residential real estate loans, especially for jumbo loans and home equity lines of credit. This aligns with the Mortgage Credit Availability Index from the Mortgage Bankers Association (see page 22), which shows credit availability is close to the lowest level since 2013.

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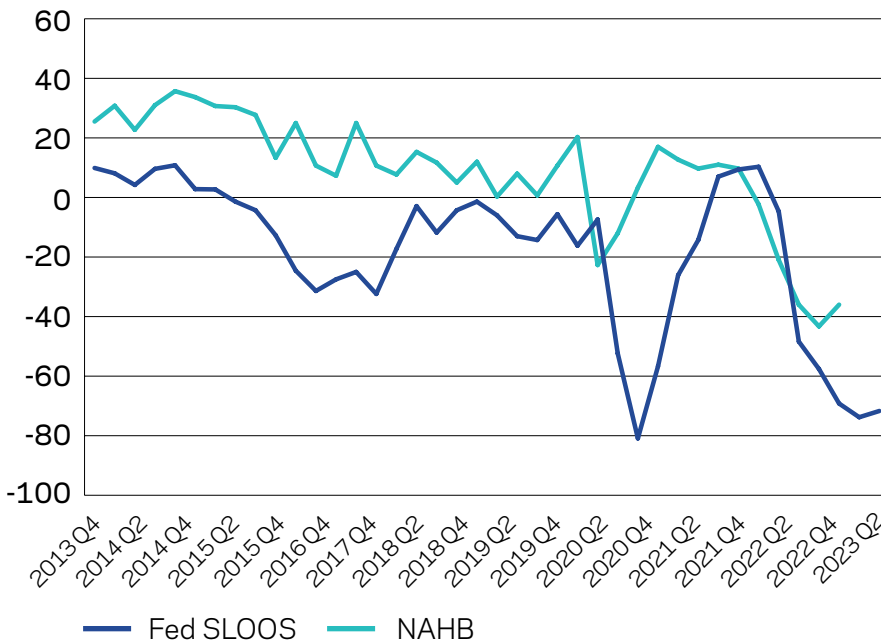
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CREDIT AVAILABILITY: AD&C LOANS



SOURCE: FRED; NAHB; ZONDA (ABOVE 0 CAPTURES EASING CONDITIONS. BELOW 0 CAPTURES TIGHTENING.)

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Tighter lending standards for consumer loans started following the Great Recession and have gotten even more restrictive since. However, it's important to note these standards haven't necessarily slowed housing growth; rather, they've helped ensure today's home buyers are creditworthy and have contributed to rebuilding confidence in the long-term stability of the industry.

Credit tightening that becomes too restrictive is one of the risks of the "long and variable lags" of the Fed's policy changes. If banks freeze up, the soft-landing hopes could turn into a hard-landing reality. A modest tightening of credit, though, is good for the economy as banks exercise more risk management and the excess spending in



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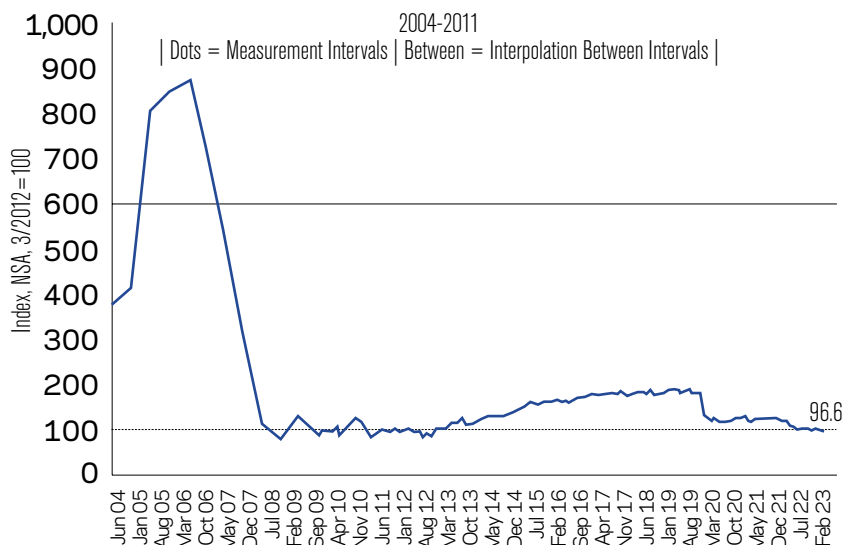
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MORTGAGE CREDIT AVAILABILITY INDEX

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the economy cools.

Ali Wolf is the chief economist for Zonda, the largest home building prop tech company in North America. As head of the economics department, Ali manages and analyzes the content for Zonda, runs special research projects, acts as a go-to advisor for the nation's largest home builders, and presents nationwide covering topics across the housing market and wider economy. Ali is the creator of Zonda's proprietary indices, including the New Home Pending Sales Index and the New Home Lot Supply Index. Prior to joining the Zonda team, Ali worked for another consultancy firm and was a researcher for both the Canadian and UK Parliaments. Ali holds a Bachelor's Degree from The Ohio State University in Economics and a Master's Degree from the London School of Economics in Real Estate Economics and Finance.

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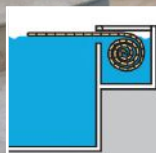
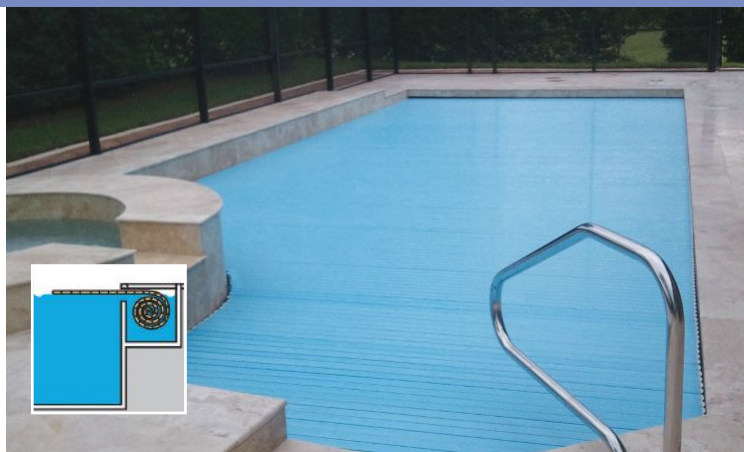
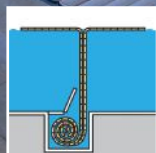
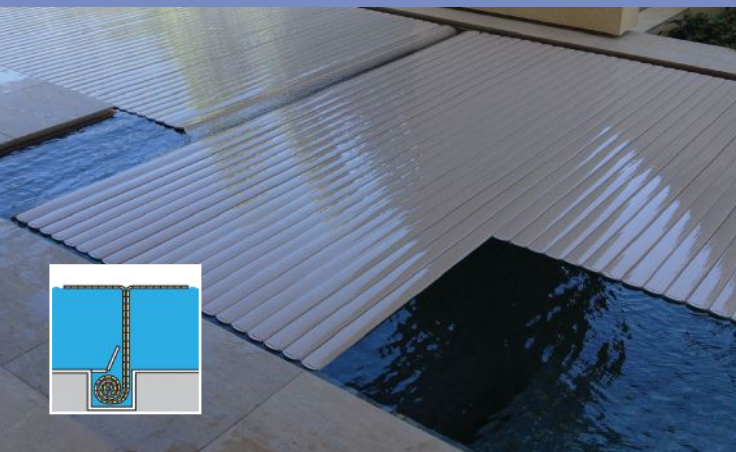


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Out of the Box Business Ideas

How pool builders and service companies can diversify revenue streams

BY MICHELLE KAVANAUGH



The trades industry is ever evolving, and pool builders and service companies are no exception. In a world where market dynamics, customer preferences, and technology are constantly shifting, relying on a single revenue stream can be a risky strategy.

Diversifying revenue streams is more than a buzzword — it's a vital strategy that enhances resilience against economic downturns and provides new avenues for growth. Businesses can pivot more efficiently in response to market trends, reducing dependence on any single segment of their portfolio. Diversification doesn't merely mitigate risks; it opens doors to innovation and expansion.

Here are some ideas that could help generate revenue for a pool business, especially in competitive and saturated markets.

ARTIFICIAL TURF

Artificial turf aligns well with the outdoor living spaces around pools.

As clients seek cohesive and beautiful landscaping that requires minimal upkeep, this low-maintenance alternative to natural grass can present the perfect solution. Its resilience to weather, ability to conserve water, and year-round green appearance make it an attractive option for homeowners and commercial properties.

Artificial turf, though a low-maintenance product, still requires professional care to ensure its longevity, appearance and safety. Regular maintenance includes cleaning to remove debris and dirt and keep the turf looking fresh. In pet-friendly or high-traffic areas, sanitizing the turf might be necessary, and professionals can do this without damaging the

material. Over time, artificial turf may show signs of wear and tear. Regular professional inspections can identify and fix these issues before they become significant problems.

By providing these ongoing services, companies can stay engaged with clients throughout the year, rather than just during the installation phase.

Here are some tips to increase success in an artificial turf business:

Understanding the product: Artificial turf comes in various types, each suited to specific applications. Knowing the right product for each situation requires understanding the client's needs and the turf's characteristics. Consider obtaining specialized training or certification in its installation and maintenance. This can provide credibility and ensure you're up to date with the latest techniques and technologies.

Installation expertise: Proper installation is crucial to ensure the artificial turf looks natural, drains properly, and lasts for years. This may involve ground preparation, precise cutting and shaping, and secure fastening.

By adding artificial turf installation and maintenance to their suite of services, pool companies can tap into a growing market, diversify their offerings, and increase revenue.

CHRISTMAS LIGHT INSTALLATION

Christmas light hanging offers an enticing seasonal business opportunity, while requiring minimal investment in equipment

and providing a way to leverage a pool company's existing client base. By offering Christmas light installation, maintenance, and removal services, businesses can transform the winter downtime into a bustling and profitable season. Furthermore, this service can enhance customer loyalty by providing value year-round, opening doors for potential referrals and ongoing business relationships.

Here are some tips to increase success in a Christmas Light Business:

Get educated: There is a training course at www.christmaslightsdesign.com/installtraining that covers how to properly estimate the cost of installation, design eye-catching and safe Christmas light displays, what equipment you should purchase, and writing contracts to protect your business.

Leverage existing client base: Use your existing relationships with pool customers to promote your new service. Create enticing packages that combine pool and Christmas light services for a unique offering.

Post-installation support and removal: Offer maintenance and support services for the lighting systems throughout the season and include timely removal services after the holiday season, demonstrating respect for the customer's property and schedule.

The Christmas light market is ripe with potential. With the right preparation and execution, it can become a rewarding addition to your business.

PARTNER WITH HOME IMPROVEMENT STORES

If you've garnered a wealth of knowledge and experience, why not share it? Offering workshops and training sessions on pool maintenance, landscaping or even DIY home improvement can not only generate income but also help build community connections.

Consider forming partnerships

with home improvement stores to offer installation and consultation services for outdoor and indoor water features, spas and other related products. This collaboration can provide a steady stream of business during the off-season or year-round.

Remember, diversification isn't about departing from your core business but enhancing and enriching it. The skills and expertise cultivated in the pool industry are enormously transferable. It's about being adaptable, creative, and forward-thinking.

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Lagoons Make A Splash with Residential Developers

Lagoons and waterpark-inspired amenities continue on the rise in new communities and multi-family housing projects.

BY LEAH DRAFFEN



The sizzling summer heat has pushed people throughout the U.S. to find cooling water retreats — whether natural or human-made.

For master plan developers and home builders, the addition of a water amenity to existing and new communities can create a “vacation at home” setting for residents to boost sales and community morale.

While resort-style pools, lazy rivers and waterslides have been staples for quite some time in communi-

ties experiencing warmer climates, the pandemic highlighted the importance of such amenities close to home. Inland community residents can still live “waterfront” with the addition of lagoons and other water features.

Freehold Communities, a developer of master-planned communities, offers an example: Shearwater in St. Augustine, Fla. It boasts a zero-entry pool, Florida’s longest lazy river, a multi-lane lap pool, and a three-story

waterslide tower. The thoughtful addition of these resort-style amenities fosters connectivity and convenience for all homeowners, says Florida division president Mike McCollum.

“Residents love the variety of water-centered amenity options offered in Shearwater, especially living in Florida,” he says. “Not only does it encourage a sense of adventure, but it offers a resort-styled Florida lifestyle.”

Additionally, these features have the potential to foster and enhance community clubs and activities. For instance, the community has its own swim team, the Shearwater Sharks, which holds practice and competitions at the multi-lane lap pool.

SUPERSIZING WATER AMENITIES WITH LAGOONS

Another developer in the Sunshine State, Metro Development Group, recently completed a 15-acre lagoon in Pasco County.

Touted as the largest human-made lagoon in the country, Mirada is the third opened by Metro Development Group and MetroLagoons. The Mirada community, which began sales in 2020, will include 4,500 homes from a number of builders.

“So many out-of-state shoppers coming to Florida envision the beach lifestyle, but living on the coast is expensive and may also present challenges around parking, crowds

PHOTO COURTESY METRO DEVELOPMENT GROUP AND METROLAGOONS

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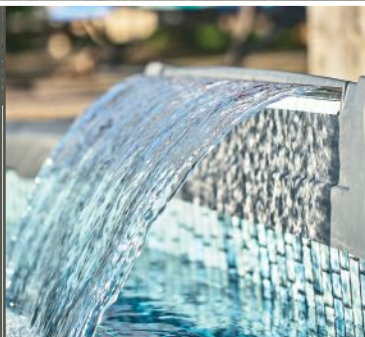
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of tourists, etc.,” says Vaike O’Grady, vice president of marketing and communications at Metro Development Group. “Lagoon-style water amenities bring the beach inland to create coastal communities without the coastal prices.”

In addition to creating year-round activities and an opportunity to connect with neighbors, O’Grady shares that the lagoons serve as a key driver of growth in their communities. Lagoons are in the works for up to eight current and planned developments throughout Florida, O’Grady notes.

Uri Man, CEO of The Lagoon Development Co. — which develops Land Tejas’ lagoons among other projects — agrees that the lagoons bring growth, additional profit, and success for home builders in master-planned communities.

DRAWING TRAFFIC AND HOME BUYERS

Man has seen firsthand the benefits of lagoons in master plans.

Coining it “the lagoon effect,” he shares that the 2-acre lagoon at Land Tejas’ Balmoral community in Humble, Texas, helped builders sell 740 homes in one year.

“Our builders say that their models get 10 times more traffic inside of a community where there is a lagoon versus a community without one,” explains Man, who previously led Crystal Lagoons US Corp before joining Land Tejas and ultimately launching his current company with Al Brende.

“People are curious, so you get more people who are looking to buy, which means there’s a better conversion rate, allowing builders to sell more homes more quickly.”

CREATING ENDLESS ACTIVITIES

While establishing the essence of resort-style living, the lagoons also pro-



vide a setting for extra, water-related amenities in the community.

Mirada Lagoon incorporates an event space, food trucks, kayak and paddleboard rentals, an inflatable floating water obstacle course, a swim-up bar, and beach areas with complimentary seating, plus various activities such as yoga, live music, and movie and trivia nights.

“Response to lagoons in established communities has been overwhelmingly positive,” O’Grady says. “Residents enjoy the convenience and accessibility of recreational water activities and the sense of community they provide. These amenities attract people of all ages and serve as popular gathering spaces for social events.”

Looking to the west, Land Tejas’ is building a second lagoon project, this one in the 2,300-acre Lago Mar master plan in Texas City. The 12-acre lagoon is centered in a 100-acre entertainment district with multiple beaches, a children’s beach with water features, an infinity-edge pool overlooking the lagoon, a floating

obstacle course, water sports from kayaking to sailing, and a two-story swim-up bar on an island. A clubhouse will feature conference rooms and a resident fitness center.

DRIVING ADDITIONAL REVENUE

Water sport rentals, bar sales, and other fee-based experience upgrades can offset the expenses of maintaining a lagoon.

However, Land Tejas and MetroLagoons have also found success in opening the spaces to the public. Both companies offer passes to their lagoons, their amenities and other ticketed live events.

“Instead of telling people how much money it’s going to cost to operate, I always talk about how much money the lagoon generates if it is open to the public,” Man says.

Offering an idea of what a lagoon could cost upfront, Man shares a range of \$30 million to \$35 million for a smaller lagoon with all the features around it — a bar, beaches, a clubhouse.

In 2020, Land Tejas opened a



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portion of Lago Mar's lagoon to the public.

"It not only became a great example of how to operate safely during COVID but served as a beta test for what could happen if the lagoons were open to the public," Man says. "We had over 40,000 visitors in a matter of weeks."

The trial run's success birthed LagoonFest Texas, which allows the public to buy passes to the lagoon five days a week and rent various experiences from floating cabanas to party pavilions.

However, to preserve the community's privacy, portions of the lagoon have remained resident-only.

MAINTAINING QUALITY AND SAFETY

To manage millions of gallons of water and thousands of feet of shorelines, MetroLagoons enlists a dedicated team that ensures clean and safe water quality.

"Regular testing, filtration systems, and debris removal are carried out daily to maintain water clarity," O'Grady says. "The maintenance team also conducts inspections, repairs, and monitors the lagoon's infrastructure."

Land Tejas hires dedicated third-party contractors for water quality, lagoon maintenance, and membership, safety, and access management.

For the water amenities at Shearwater, McCollum says, "An on-site management team monitors and supports the cleanliness of the aquatic facilities, deck and chemical levels on a daily basis."

Lifeguards are on duty while the lazy river and water slide are open.

Regarding safety, O'Grady adds, "While we do have dedicated guards stationed at all water activities, the open swimming areas of the lagoon are swim-at-your-own-risk. Life

jackets are available in designated areas throughout the park."

With both Land Tejas and Metro located in areas with unpredictable and often tropical weather, O'Grady and Man highlight the importance of weather safety. Land Tejas retains a meteorologist who communicates potential threats and risks daily, while MetroLagoons strictly adheres to weather-related safety protocols to keep residents and guests safe.

In the event of a hurricane or severe storm, MetroLagoons secures infrastructure, establishes emergency response plans and keeps in communication with residents, visitors and team members. This consideration also went into the project's development: While the lagoons are built to catch water, the machine rooms at Lago Mar and Balmoral are elevated to withstand potential flooding.

PROMPTING FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

A lagoon amenity also can benefit the larger community.

"On a wider scale, the lagoon communities contribute to the area's vitality and economic growth, bringing visitors and jobs to the area," O'Grady says.

Using Lago Mar as an example, Man points out that the lagoons can spur growth not normally seen in the suburbs.

"These lagoons allow for bettering the potential development opportunities in a shorter period of time," he says. "In addition to a profitable restaurant, you wouldn't normally see a hotel being built in the middle of a master plan or mid- and high-rise apartments, but we're getting those. We're creating the waterfront and bringing the beach experience to these communities."

This article previously appeared in sister publication Builder.

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The main pool reaches 17-foot depths. The area with the palm tree, to the right, is the floating firepit. Behind it, with the red ladder in front, is a window that will be submerged when the pool is filled.





Finishing Touches

Rick Chafey provides an update on this backyard waterpark, with progress in the surf simulator and movable deck.

BY RICK CHAFEY

With almost three years behind us, we're on the home stretch to finishing this backyard waterpark — perhaps the largest we've ever designed and installed.

The site includes a large main outdoor pool, two-level grotto with a deck above it, a secondary outdoor pool set at basement level, and an indoor pool.

But most unique are the amusement-park-level features: a 550-foot-long lazy river with acrylic windows in the floor that peer into a go-kart track below; a shark tank, with windows on both sides to be viewed from the home and pool; and the custom-fabricated surf simulator with a movable deck that covers the machinations in the absence of hang-10s.

Over the last few months, we've made major strides on the latter, especially. And with so much of the large structural work complete, we're now focusing on the extremities of the entire project, including pump and equipment set-up, applying finishing materials, and installing final touches such as handrails and landscaping.

PHOTOS: RED ROCK POOLS & SPAS



Pictured left: The surf simulator in progress. The inflatable portion will sit atop the slats, with the funnel intake underneath. The notches in the edges of the basin will accommodate rollers for the movable floor. Right: The movable floor during installation, with the artificial turf pad below.

SURF SIMULATOR AND MOVABLE DECK

The surf simulator, custom designed by FlowRider, is inflatable so that, when not in use, it will be deflated, stowed in the basin below and then covered by a movable deck.

The movable deck, by Twinscapes, will sit on a bed of artificial turf when the surf machine is in use. It will be finished in a composite material.

Below the surf simulator and movable deck sits a walk-in vault space holding all the mechanical and operational systems for these two features. With so much of the rest of the site built up, access was limited, which required us to crane this equipment in place. This required quite a bit of coordination and planning.

The vault is in place, and now the FlowRider and movable deck are being built concurrently, because they're so closely connected.

Installing the inflatable portion of the Flow Rider is one of the last things we will begin and one of the last that we finish. We're holding off on this

portion until 99% of the job is complete, so the inflatable component doesn't get damaged from surrounding construction.

The surf simulator measures 43 feet long and 16 feet wide, or almost 700 square feet. It consists of a substructure that starts with a cast-in-place basin. Inside the basin, about 48 inches above the floor sit a series of horizontal slats, which will support the inflatable. Underneath the slats sits a large funnel intake that goes to a 125 horsepower motor that then curves the water back and sends it across the top of the surf machine.

Of all the things that set this system apart from a construction standpoint, probably the most unusual was the power requirement. It is driven by a 125 horsepower, three-phase pump — 12½ times the size of even a pump that we'd use for your typical lazy river, and 50 times bigger than a typical pool pump, when it comes to voltage and load.

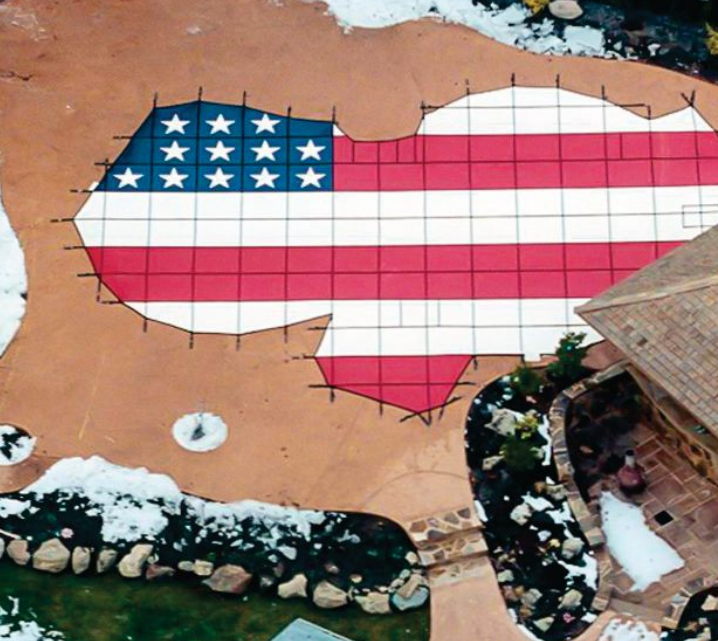
The moving deck has required some of the most delicate construction on

this project. We have to build it to zero tolerances — that 50-by-50-foot area has to be literally perfect. The movable deck was built in Twinscapes' headquarters in Spain. It came in eight modules that we have attached in the field to create the deck. This is one of the largest decks they have built to move horizontally.

Then we had the FlowRider getting built in another part of the U.S. — and their normal tolerances are tiny in any application. When we brought the deck and surf simulator together on site, we had to match all dimensions perfectly. We have had to double, triple and quadruple-check everything with the four project managers we have on site everyday. Then the manufacturers could come in and assemble everything in place. For them, it's like a big erector set.

On one side of the surf simulator basin are notches in the concrete. These accommodate the rollers for the moving deck. Because this was a one-off installation, the system required some adjustments in the field, as well as in the factory. The system rolls on very

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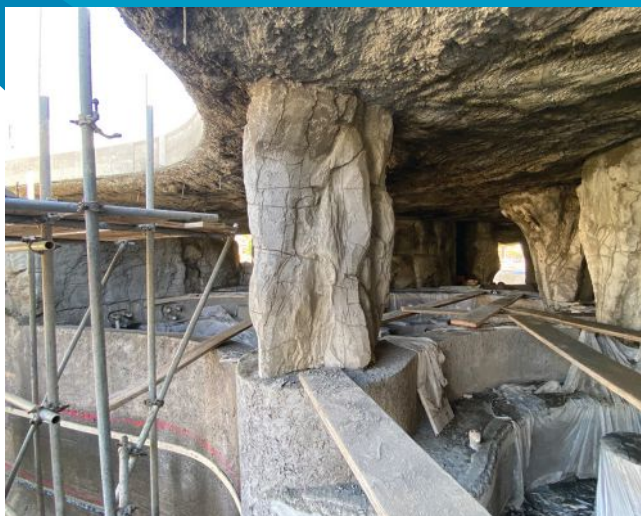
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Clockwise from top left: One of several outdoor equipment sets; one of the indoor equipment vaults; artificial rockwork on one of the grottos; a grotto under construction, with the swim-up spa in the foreground.

wide nylon wheels, which we hoped could run directly across the artificial turf pad underneath. But we discovered two things. First, the turf provides more resistance than we wanted. But also, because of the Phoenix heat, the nylon rollers were crushing the turf during testing. We'd expected to see a wear pattern over time, but just during testing, the turf became damaged enough to be obvious. So we're going to use different wheels and install a stainless steel track for them, rather than having them roll directly on the turf. This way,

we expect everything to stay aligned. We'll cut the turf out of the wheel areas, set an alignment track in place, then change to rollers that have guides on them so they'll remain on the track. This should lower the resistance and keep it tracking better.

We expect the same kind of fine-tuning with the FlowRider. Once we complete it, we'll start running it to make sure we get the kind of flow we want, in terms of volume and direction. We used vector analysis during the design phase to predict how it would

move and affect the lazy river. But, once we get it fired up, we'll see how the surf simulator works and fine-tune the variable-frequency drives to speed it up or slow it down as needed. We also might have to adjust where the water is coming from (front or back) to make sure everything functions as intended.

EQUIPMENT SETS AND VAULTS

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Clockwise from top left: The lazy river in advanced stages of construction, with the artificial turf pad to the left; The juncture where the surf simulator and river meet, with the river to the left; the lower pool, with the hole denoting where the slide exits; the tube slide being built around the structure.

efficiency of the various systems. Instead of having everything in one place and running the plumbing miles away, we have three outdoor pool filter and pump areas, plus seven underground vault systems throughout the property. In addition to the equipment you'd see in any pad, some vaults also contain the river pumps or in-floor cleaning valve actuators. This keeps things closer to where we're using them, instead of trying to transgress the entire property.

We've overloaded the automation systems offered by anyone when it comes to pumps, valves or triggers. To handle it all, we have three separate equipment automation systems that can work autonomously or within the home-control system. Each operates as a stand-alone system and has its own login.

GROTTO AND ROCKWORK

The artificial rockwork throughout the project is more than 95% complete.

Some areas still need final touchup and paint, but the rock structures are now built and in place. It's just some minor tweaking, touch-up and paint areas.

This includes the two-level grotto with deck on top. This will include a full bar with plenty of appliances, so we're using residential house plumbers to handle the drain lines and plumbing fixtures. We're finishing with the spas and swim-up bar areas, and starting to get the cabinets and finishes in place.



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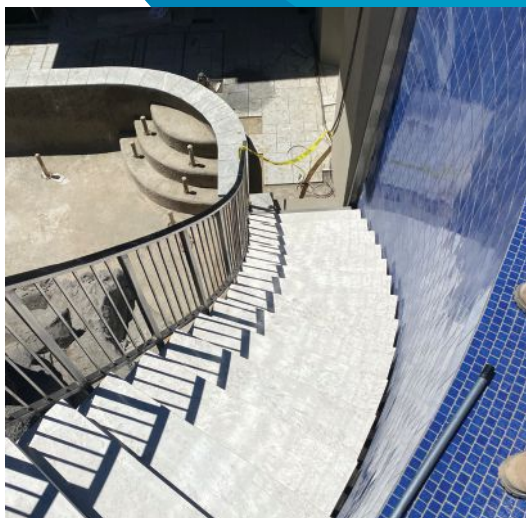
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Clockwise from top left: The shark tank interior with coral elements; the shark tank window from the pool side, seen with the ladder in front of it; a stairway leading from the main-pool level down to the lower pool; the nearly completed interior pool.

At this point, we'll start work on the deck above the grottos, where we'll have a fire pit, seating area and stairs.

Our rock crew has been working on this job for seven months straight — all day, everyday. This time, we used faux rock because we had no access to set up cranes and move boulders around. When you get to this scale, the rocks have to be the size of cars, so guys cannot move them without the machinery. Plus, real rock probably would have cost double. Real stone just takes a lot more to manage, cost-wise and time-wise. Faux rock also provides increased design flexibility.

PREPARING TO FINISH

As I've mentioned before, the design of this project has taken hundreds of hours. Given the scale, commissioning also will take several times longer than it would on a typical backyard.

We made sure to inform the homeowner early on that we expect 45 days to get through commissioning and operations — making sure everything not only operates but works as intended.

We currently have the shark tank going through this stage — we're starting to put the water in and get

it ready for life.

Every phase of this pool will involve the same process — from slides to waterfalls to mist systems to the Flow Rider to movable decks to river current systems to go-kart charging and tracks. We expect to do that whole process with a crew of three or four people.

Rick Chafey is co-owner and founder of Red Rock Contractors and Red Rock Pools & Spas, in Chandler, Ariz. He also serves as an instructor for Watershape University and is a co-founder of Ask the Masters, a Facebook group that produces informational podcasts for the pool/spa industry.



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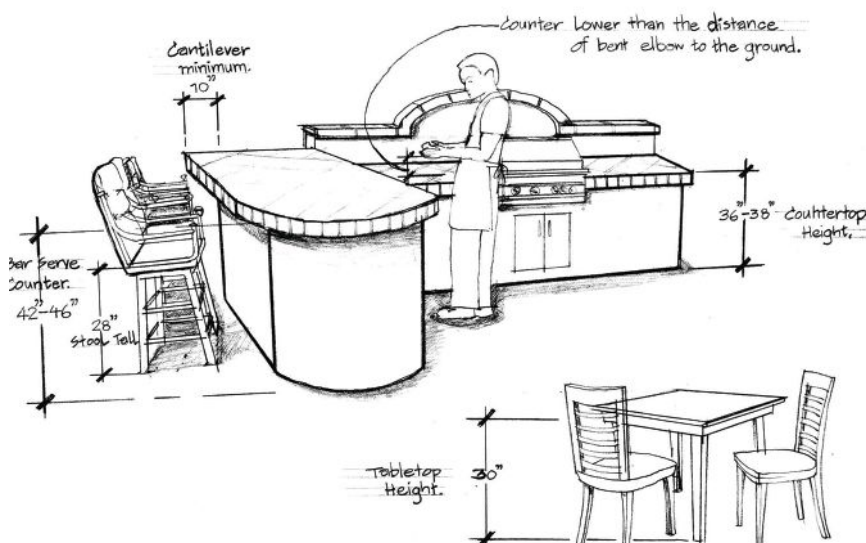
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ALL IN GOOD MEASURE

How to give everything its space for maximum comfort and utility

BY REBECCA ROBLEDÓ





You can have all the beautiful, fun components you want in the backyard, but the whole thing moves up a notch when the space feels right.

And while many factors, both concrete and abstract, play a part in creating a true feel-good space, proper spacing and dimensions are crucial.

Here, design professionals share advice and optimal dimensions for a number of backyard elements.

SPACING FOR PATIOS AND BACKYARD ROOMS

When it comes to sizing your outdoor rooms, things can be a bit subjective, depending on such factors as furniture

size and location of support posts for overhead structures. However, experts offer some minimums.

For spaces meant to accommodate a 48-inch round table and four chairs, designer Scott Cohen provides a minimum patio size of 10½ feet, but he tries to make it 12 feet. If a round table measures 60 inches, he'll map out a 12-to-14-foot space.

"You want to be able to walk around the table, even after the chairs are pulled out," says Cohen, garden artisan and president of the Green Scene in Chatsworth, Calif.

If the area will include the works — large sectional sofa, outdoor kitchen,

fireplace, television area and a bar — Nick Hauk starts at 20-by-20 feet.

"And even that's going to feel a little tight," says the owner of Plano, Texas-based Pure Design. "I think 25-by-25 feet is a great size if you're going for the whole package for outdoor living."

For a more simple arbor that will contain a smaller sofa and maybe a small fireplace, but no kitchen, 16-by-16 feet often works well, he adds.

TRAFFIC FLOW

You don't want your clients to have to walk sideways as they move through the yard, so wide-enough walkways are crucial.

Ask clients what traffic will be like. Will they entertain regularly — even if it's just hosting another family for dinner al fresco? If so, you'll want the walkways to be 5 feet wide. This allows two people to pass each other comfortably or walk together side by side.

If you expect people to move through the yard by themselves most of the time, then many designers will make the walkway 3 feet wide. However, Hauk prefers to start at the Americans with Disabilities Act minimum of 42 inches, or 3½ feet. If one of the users actually does use a wheelchair, he'll try to make the walkway 5½ to 6 feet wide, to allow both the wheelchair and another person.

If the clients plan to entertain large parties on a regular basis, Cohen will try to make the walkways 6-feet-wide — but only if it's in scale with the lot, and it ranks in the priority list.

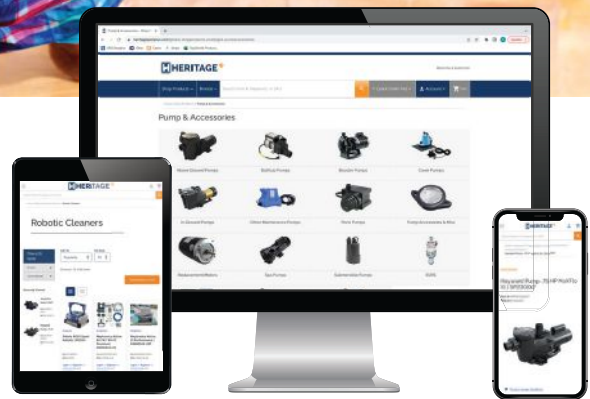
When considering traffic flow, also give careful consideration to stepping stones and stepping pads. Not only do you want to make them wide enough to accommodate one or two adults, based on expected traffic. You also want to pace them in line with a human stride.

The average person has a stride length of 2.1 to 2.5 feet, Hauk explains. So, generally speaking, 2 feet will be a touch too small, but 2½ feet will usually



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work. But make special allowances for those who are substantially shorter or taller.

“I think if somebody is over 6½ feet, you might want to go to a 3-foot stride,” he says. “But somebody between 5 to 6 feet, those are usually right around 2 to 2½ feet, where you don’t have to take a double step [on a pad].”

COUNTERTOPS AND BARS

The industry-standard counter height is 36 inches.

However, in backyard applications, that may not always work out so cut-and-dry. You might use a thicker material on top, which could bring the countertop higher.

Before starting construction on the countertops, figure out what appliances you plan to install, and take care to leave the manufacturer-specified clearances. This also can affect the height of the counters.

“If the refrigerator is 34 inches, I can create a cutout on the bottom of my counter, or I can lift my counter to 37 inches,” says Cohen, also the author of *The Big Book of Barbecue Plans*. “I just have to know ahead of time.”

Anywhere from 35- to 37 inches should work for barbecue counter height, he adds.

Bar counters, on the other hand, should hover around 42 inches in height. This can vary by an inches or two. A bar counter should also include a 10-inch cantilever to accommodate people’s knees when they sit on a stool.

Ideal counter depths — the measurement from front to back — vary depending on the application. You’ll need at least 24 inches to accommodate drawers and cabinets, and 36 inches if you’re going to install a grill. This allows the hood to open.

Some appliances have gotten narrow enough to be accommodated by 24- or 30 inches of depth. However, Hauk doesn’t like to take his design cues from that. Instead, he wants to



make sure the grill master has enough space to comfortably place a cookie sheet of steaks.

“I like 36 inches of depth,” he says. “That allows you to get the cookie sheet up there, and leaves you plenty of real estate so it’s not hanging off the edge.”

Depths also vary for bars. If they can be accessed from either side, you can make them wider — say, 24- to 30 inches. However, if people can only reach over the countertop from one side, keep it to 18- to 20 inches in width.

“You have to be careful, because sometimes a client is going to ask you for more counter space — they want deeper this or more that,” Cohen says. “You have to consider the ergonomics behind it, because the human body is only going to reach so far.”

PLANTERS AND TREES

When sizing planters, or creating openings in the hardscape for trees, consider how much space the plants need, as well as the room needed for a proper drainage system, if they’ll be installed.

While many designers will begin with 18-inch planters, Hauk finds that too restrictive. He starts at 3-foot wide.

“Anything narrower than 3 feet really forces your hand into doing

some type of vine or climber in that bed — something that won’t grow out, but will grow up,” he says. “But when you start talking about quarterly or seasonal color, 3 feet minimum is great, but 5 is even better. It just allows you to get a little more volume inside those beds.”

Additionally, these widths make it easier to install an underground drainage system in the planters.

Trees need enough space to live. However, the damage done to them from being restricted won’t cause damage until well after the backyard construction is complete. To prevent customers from losing a tree two or three years down the road, take extra care.

“Trees don’t like it when you encroach more than half the distance of the canopy,” Hauk says.

If you will be designing a deck or other hardscape near a tree, measure how far the canopy overhangs the trunk. Then halve that distance. That’s the absolute closest you would want the deck to come to the tree.

For example, say the branches span 12 feet from the trunk. You would want to keep hardscape at least 6 feet away. Another way is to find out the canopy’s total diameter, then divide by four.



CamerEye

CamerEye is an AI Smart Pool System engineered to cover the entire pool life cycle. The scalable system expands from pool construction, pool safety permitting and compliance, homeowner water safety, pool maintenance and automation. Installation is an easy few steps. Referrals to installers are also available.

Contact: CamerEye.ai



CCEI Pool USA

The Brio LED 3-inch niche-less pool light is designed to replace traditional incandescent bulbs in a 1.5-inch return fitting. It's available with 50-, 100- and 150-foot cable lengths with quick disconnect features for ease of repair and replacement. Available with fittings for vinyl liner, fiberglass and concrete pools.

Contact: ccei-pool.com/us



Fountain People

The Mediterranean Scupper imitates the classic beauty of ancient fountains using a traditional dark bronze finish. Verde-green highlights accent the detailed decorative etching on the surface. It measures 5 3/4-inch in diameter with a 5 1/4-inch projection and supplied with a 1 1/2-inch FPT connection.

Contact: fountainpeople.com



JED Pool Tools

The 2-Tier Flower Fountain is a wall-mounted pool fountain featuring a flower petal design with two spray tiers. It works on both aboveground and in-ground pools, and offers fully adjustable fountain spray height and direction. Fast and easy to install, this fountain hooks directly into pool return.

Contact: jedpooltools.com



Poolmaster

The Summer Garden Inflatable Pool is an adult-oriented pool specifically designed for patios, decks, lawns and other smooth surfaces, making it ideal for apartment or condo living. An inflatable pool bottom provides comfort sitting, and four beverage holders integrated into the perimeter top of the pool.

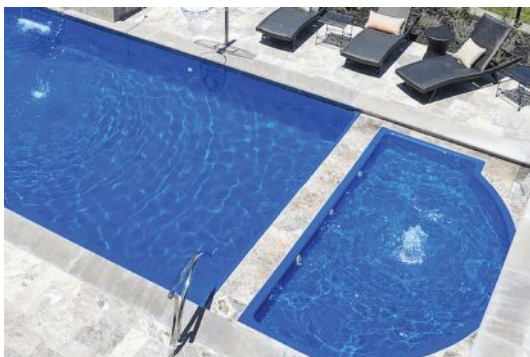
Contact: poolmaster.com



Rico Rock

Quarry Blocks are a new line of cast-concrete waterfall kits designed specifically to meet the demand for contemporary styled waterfall features on pools. These dense concrete rock components create predictable finished waterfalls for customers while allowing builders to control their time and costs

Contact: ricorock.com



Thursday Pools

The Wet Deck Lounging Pool is an 8-by-14-feet fiberglass unit just 12 inches deep designed to create an area for sunbathers, toddlers or those who just want to sit in a shallow spot to get their feet wet. It can be installed flush with the deck or raised with a spillway. Available in seven different colors.

Contact: thursdaypools.com



Water Tech Corp.

The Pool Blaster Pool Pouch conveniently stores and organizes all pool toys and inflatables so they no longer clutter the backyard. It easily hangs on the side of aboveground pools, walls, fences, gates, etc. Side pockets give easy access and stores actively used items such as goggles, swim fins, etc.

Contact: watertechcorp.com

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RECOGNIZING EARNED INCOME



BY MELANIE HODGDON



“WITH T&M INVOICING, THE HARSH FACT OF THE MARKUP AMOUNT WILL BE IN THE CUSTOMER’S FACE WITH EVERY INVOICE. WITH CONTRACT PRICING, THE MARKUP IS EMBEDDED, AS IT IS WITH VIRTUALLY ANY OTHER PRODUCT WE BUY, FROM GROCERIES TO TOOLS.”

To understand true profitability, it’s important to look at earned revenue instead of cash received. For example, if you require a 20% deposit at contract signing, and the job is sold at \$100,000, the \$20,000 check you receive shouldn’t be classified as earned income because you don’t have any costs to record against it.

There are several ways that you can end up with the desired result, which is to see only earned income on your profit and loss statement (P&L). Be aware that if the method used ends up with your having dollars of payments in a liability account, in terms of tax reporting, “cash is cash”; that is, if you file your taxes on a cash basis (check with your accountant on this), any dollars — earned or unearned — that you receive from customers must be reported as income. This is typically handled at year end by the tax preparer making a journal entry to temporarily classify these dollars as income on the last day of the tax year (Dec. 31 for calendar year filers) and then reversing the entry on the first day of the following year (Jan. 1 for calendar year filers). Doing so properly adds the received dollars to the P&L where they can be included as taxable income, but the reversal keeps things accurate for the following year.

METHOD 1: TIME AND MATERIALS INVOICING

In this method, the job is sold with the understanding that actual costs (burdened labor plus actual material and subcontractor costs) will be reported, an agreed-upon markup will be applied, and the customer will pay as the project progresses.

Pros: For contractors who have limited confidence in their estimating abilities, this can be a safe option. It can also be useful when costs fluctuate wildly due to supply issues.

If payments are scheduled on a regular basis (say, every Tuesday following submission of the invoice on Monday, when all costs from the prior week have been assembled), the customer will be dealing with bite-sized outlays of money, and the weekly payment will be expected and hopefully planned for.

Cons: For the customer, there is no way to have a budgeted cost up front. If things crop up, too bad; they still have to pay.

Also, because invoices are generated as the job progresses, it’s impossible for the contractor to avoid shelling out money before it is reimbursed by the customer. This breaks the rule “Always pay for the project using the customer’s money.” For example, with a contract price, an invoice typically accompanies the signing of the contract. These bucks are designed to cover the startup costs (and accompanying overhead) that inevitably occur prior to what the customer would call “the start of the job.” With T&M invoicing, if state law permits, it’s best to request a “deposit” amount beforehand. This can be sold as a way to “hold your slot in our schedule” or anything else that sounds reasonable. These dollars can then be credited back to the customer on each invoice. The customer will end up paying the same amount, but the contractor won’t have to carry the job between signing the contract and creating that initial invoice that follows the first visible work on the project.

The contractor may feel compelled (by a desire for total transparency or in response to customer demand) to provide detailed information regarding time spent and actual costs incurred. This can be time-consuming, although with the proper preparation, reports can be memorized (a QuickBooks function) and easily run for each billing period. Under no circumstances should the



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contractor feel compelled to provide paper copies of everything.

T&M jobs have a tendency to go on and on. While there should be an agreed-upon scope of work, T&M projects seem to expand more easily than contract price jobs. One reason may be that with a contract price job, changes are recorded as change orders, which must be reviewed, agreed upon, and paid for by the customer. But with T&M jobs, the creation of change orders may not occur. Such changes may simply be viewed (sometimes by both parties) as an expansion of the existing job rather than as reason to commit to a separate agreement. Because the customer will see actual costs (the level of detail provided will probably vary from company to company), the harsh fact of the markup amount will be in the customer's face with every invoice. With contract pricing, the markup is embedded, as it is with virtually any other product we buy, from groceries to tools.

METHOD 2: PERCENTAGE-OF-COMPLETION INVOICING

On the surface, this may seem identical to T&M invoicing. However, the difference is that there is a set budget (the sale price) to which all parties have agreed. The scope of the job is understood, and the payment schedule may be time-based (invoice every week or two) or milestone-based (payments tied to milestones within the project). Just avoid creating milestones based on "completion of" since supply delays, inclement weather, crew injuries, or any number of delaying events can happen. Instead, tie to "start of" or "ready for" milestones that provide more flexibility.

Pros: Because, in theory, invoices are based on actual costs incurred to date, this method conforms to the

Matching Principle, which states that revenue is earned at the same proportion as costs are incurred. For instance, let's say the project budget is \$100,000 and the project was sold at a 50% markup for \$150,000. Then if you have spent \$35,000 in costs (and remain on budget), the project is considered 35% complete, and you have earned 35% of the job sale price (\$52,500).

Everybody knows ahead of time what the job will cost (excluding any change work).

Cons: Success is completely dependent upon accurate job costing. Errors such as not using fully burdened labor costs when calculating how much the company has spent on labor can cause huge problems if the cost of the job was estimated using burdened labor costs.

Cost overruns must be tracked carefully. If the budget for materials was \$100,000, but somebody cut the Parallam 5 inches too short, the additional cost of replacing it (or even the time required to figure out and execute an acceptable workaround) can't contribute to the original budget, because doing so would artificially decrease the percentage of completion. Deviations from the budget must be tracked carefully and a predictable method for reviewing, adjusting, and then calculating percentage of completion must be established (and followed).

A reasonable method of tracking and invoicing change work must be established, incorporated into the contract, and explained to the customer. Some contractors prefer to invoice 100% of the change order, treating it more or less like a small separate job. Others prefer to add the estimated cost of the change order(s) to the original contract and then calculate percentage of completion based on the revised budget.

Whatever you do, just be sure it's consistent.

METHOD 3: FIXED PRICE WITH PAYMENT SCHEDULE (NO WIP)

The job is estimated, markup is applied, and the price is set. The contractor sets up a schedule of payments that will provide positive cash flow. A method for handling change work is incorporated into the contract.

Pros: All parties agree to the price and the payment schedule before the job starts. The customer knows upfront what the payments will be and can make whatever preparations are required to cover the costs as they arrive.

The contractor can front-load to cover startup costs. Typically, the first invoice is "at signing," and these funds will cover any costs incurred (including a portion of the job's "fair share" of overhead). No, this payment should not be used to make up for the last job's profit shortfall! While accurate job costing is always important (so you can spot discrepancies in expected costs and take action as the job progresses), invoicing is not dependent on it. Another nice feature is that customers typically review, approve, and then pay for change work as it occurs.

Cons: Your financials will show income based on the scheduled payments, not on earned income. So let's say you have three jobs with contracts that were signed in April. They won't start until May or June. You record the "at signing" payments as income, but none of the jobs have identifiable costs associated with them. So April's income and gross profit look fantastic, but wrong.

Note: Some companies try to avoid this by simply recording a credit to accounts receivable instead of creating an income-based invoice. The problem with this is that your



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overall accounts receivable will be inaccurate, as they will contain a bunch of negative figures. This also affects your current ratio, which provides a measure of positive cash flow.

METHOD 4: FIXED PRICE WITH PAYMENT SCHEDULE (WITH WIP)

This method is exactly the same as Method 3, described above, but on a regular, periodic basis (typically monthly), a WIP (Work In Progress) calculation is made and financials are adjusted based on the results.

WIP is based on the Matching Principle (defined in Method 2, above). Revisiting the example used in Method 2, if the project budget is \$100,000, and it was sold at a 50% markup for \$150,000, then if you have spent \$35,000 in costs (and remain on budget), the project is considered 35% complete, and you have earned 35% of the job sale price (\$52,500). But if you have front-loaded your payment schedule (which is advisable in terms of cash flow), and you have actually invoiced \$60,000 instead of the earned \$52,500, then you have overstated your income for that period and must make a correction. This is called the WIP adjustment. In this example, if you look at the P&L for that job for that period, you will see \$60,000 in income. But you should see only \$52,500. Therefore, you will need to subtract \$7,500 from that job's income. It is best to create a new income account called WIP Adjustment and make the adjustment there. The result might look something like this:

Income	Project X
Construction Income	\$60,000.00
WIP Adjustment	\$(7,500.00)
Total Income	\$52,500.00

WIP ADJUSTMENT ACCOUNT ON P&L STATEMENT

Depending on where each project is (start, middle, end), how the payment schedule has been set up, and the nature and extent of cost deviations from budget, the WIP adjustments might be either positive or negative.

Pros: If the contractor is already doing fixed price with payment schedule, this method only requires him/her to add the WIP adjustment step to increase the accuracy of the financials.

Cons: Everything said in the methods above with regard to the importance of accurate job costing (especially cost overruns) applies here. If you don't have a good handle on job costing, don't even try this, as the results will create more problems. It's one thing to have numbers that you know are accurate (the number of dollars invoiced in a given period) but misleading (they aren't all earned), and it's quite another to "improve" things by making adjustments that are wrong.

Income	Project X	Project Y	Project Z	Total
Construction Income	\$60,000.00	\$137,500.00	\$45,250.00	\$242,750.00
WIP Adjustment	\$(7,500.00)	\$(13,825.00)	\$3,125.00	\$(18,200.00)
Total Income	\$52,500.00	\$123,675.00	\$48,375.00	\$224,550.00

WIP ADJUSTMENTS FOR MULTIPLE PROJECTS

Because WIP adjustments are reversed each month, income on financial reports will be correct only 12 days out of the year—one day each month when you're making WIP adjustments.

Unless you keep a separate spreadsheet for tracking which customers are overbilled (you have invoiced more than what the job has earned) or under-billed (you haven't invoiced enough to cover the costs that have been incurred, which really means you're financing the customer's job), it can be challenging to know where each customer stands.

There's much more to calculating

“WITH FIXED-PRICE INVOICING, YOUR FINANCIALS WILL SHOW INCOME BASED ON THE SCHEDULED PAYMENTS, NOT ON EARNED INCOME.”

and tracking WIP, but this should give you the gist of the issues.

METHOD 5: THE “TWO-JOB” SYSTEM

This represents a blend of percentage-of-completion invoicing and contract price with payment schedule. Two “jobs” are created for each project. One job (the “payment” job) is used only for invoicing according to the payment schedule, and all payment dollars are considered liabilities. Invoices for the payment job affect accounts receivable but not income. This avoids including payment-schedule invoices as income on the P&L. The second job (the “project” job) is used for estimating, job costing, and invoicing percentage of completion. These invoices are “paid” immediately using a credit memo from the liability account, so the accounts-receivable balance on project jobs will always be \$0.

Pros: No adjustment to income is needed because all income on the P&L is earned. It is generated via percentage-of-completion invoices on the project job(s).

Because a single liability account (typically called “customer deposits” or similar) is used, it is easy to generate a report that shows each customer’s balance in the liability account. Customers with positive balances have been invoiced for more dollars than the job has earned; customers with negative balances have been invoiced for fewer dollars than the job has earned.

On the balance sheet, the balance of the account reveals the net amount of unearned dollars the company has collected. A positive balance indicates that the company has collected dollars that have not been earned. This is great for cash flow, but it’s important to remember that your cash balance has been inflated by these dollars. In

other words, if you have \$100,000 in your checking account but \$79,000 in your customer-deposit liability account, you really have only \$21,000 in “available” cash to spend.

This account can also be easily reconciled at the end of each job to confirm that the amount invoiced via the payment job matches the amount of income reported for the project job. For tax purposes, at year-end, a single adjusting entry can be made to zero out the balance in the customer-deposit liability account with an offset to income. As with any such tax-related adjustment, the entry would be reversed on the first day of the following year.

Cons: Unlike WIP adjustments, the two-job system typically uses periodic costs rather than cumulative costs. In other words, costs for a given period (usually a month) are included in a report that forms the basis of the percentage-of-completion calculation. This requires careful dating of bills, paychecks, etc.

As with WIP, it’s critical to take into account change orders and projected deviations from estimated costs. Otherwise, your percentage-of-completion invoices will be inaccurate.

Because income-related invoices for the project job are always paid using a credit memo to apply the customer’s dollars from scheduled payments to the project job, it’s all too easy to over-credit. In other words, it would be possible to “pay off” the income-recognizing final invoice for this job based on the Matching Principle and using liability dollars in the customer deposit account.

Melanie Hodgdon, president of Business Systems Management, provides management consulting and coaching for contractors. She co-authored “A Simple Guide to Turning a Profit as a Contractor,” with Leslie Shiner.

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POOL AND SPA NEWS



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is your hub to apply for our annual prestige programs, including Top 50 Builders and Service award programs, and Masters of Design.

Product Profiles: Aboveground Pools



Aboveground Resin Pools

Carvin's state-of-the-art Resin Aboveground Pools combine a modern design, 3D wall effects and the latest technology, says Klaudia Parker, Carvin Pool Equipment's sales director

"All resin components have been optimized for better weight distribution and optimal sturdiness by using latest available software during the design process," Parker says. "These pools stand out for exemplary quality with easy and fast installation."

The pool's walls are heat treated with a multilayer protection process to provide sturdiness. Its high and stable wall rails keep the wall in place during ground shifts.

The pools are compatible with water features as add-on accessories, such as the StarJet or the StarFall, and outside lighting as well.

For technical support and marketing materials call 866-979-4501.

Made in Canada, the pools come with a 30-year warranty.

Contact: Carvin Pool Equipment | carvinpool.com



REMORA XR1600 Portable Pool Vacuum

The REMORA XR1600 portable pool vacuum is designed for DIY or limited-access cleaning and features a wearable lithium battery pack, two-speed Smart Switch, short power cord, battery charger, debris bag, and carry handle.

Its run-time is approximately 50-75 minutes.

Contact: Hammerhead Patented Performance | hammerheadvac.com/remora



Deck-Loc Anchoring

Loop-Loc's Deck-Loc Anchoring is the first no-drill system for composite decks, according to company officials.

Exclusively offered by Loop-Loc, it's designed for easy on and easy off.

Contact: Loop-Loc | looploc.com



Merlin Industries Professional Safety Covers

Merlin Industries is your best choice for safety covers, says Alyssa Selvaggio, Merlin's marketing manager. "With five professional safety cover choices, there is something to fit everyone's needs."

Merlin's Dura-Mesh II features a combination of sunlight shading, abrasion resistance, tear strength, and burst strength.

In addition, Merlin's patented SmartMesh safety cover is the first and only mesh material to provide 100 percent shade from sunlight and offers 40 micron filtration of debris, says Selvaggio.

Technical support can be found by calling 800-289-1836.

Marketing materials are available upon request.

Covers come with 15-year limited warranties.

Contact: Merlin Industries | merlinindustries.com



Pegasus Products' Aboveground Liners

These aboveground pool liners provide a superior fit and the material is "thicker and more flexible than others available on the market," says Frank Patel, vice president of operations. He adds that the liners are made of virgin vinyl with algicide and mildew/mold inhibitors.

The firm offers five different beads plus a variety of patterns. Custom orders are accepted in season. Shown is the Westminster Tile, with a rich blue hue to make the water shimmer.

Customers are welcome to call and speak with customer service or engineering, or visit the firm's website, to ensure a great-fitting liner after they submit a drawing of the pool. Marketing materials, samples and brochures are available on request.

Noting that the company has made liners for 38 years, Patel says customer feedback has included comments on "the superior fit and quality of the liners."

Contact: Pegasus Pool Products | pegasus-products.com



MagicFlame Fire and Water Bowl

MagicFlame brings both the flicker of flames and the soothing sounds of falling water into the backyard.

Pool owners can choose a MagicFlame with just a waterfall, just a flame, or a combination of both features. With five finish options to match most poolside decor, MagicFlame is also made with fireproof and waterproof material that is lighter and stronger than standard concrete.

Select from two bowl shapes — lava rock or fire glass — and set up MagicFlame with the pool automation system for easy and convenient control. Alternatively, electronic ignition allows it to operate as a stand-alone feature with the flip of a switch or push of a button.

MagicFlame is natural gas or propane compatible, and its 12 VAC low voltage inlet power makes for simple installation. Plus, the gas-fueled fire appliance creates the natural ambiance of flame without smoke.

Contact: Pentair | pentair.com/pool

Product Profiles: Spas and Accessories



Aqua Comb

Aqua Combs come in two styles; Pool for deep pleated pool cartridges and Spa for shallow pleated spa cartridges that clean spas, hot tubs and swim spa cartridge filters.

The Aqua Comb combines 3-inch-wide powerful water sprays with a pick comb that opens the pleats and cleans the side walls, allowing the water to remove the debris.

The benefits are a fully clean cartridge that will reduce the electrical cost, increase the jet flow and extend the time between filter cleanings.

"Aqua Combs fully clean the cartridges in 3 to 5 minutes using less than 5 gallons of water," says Mark Schreiber, owner of Aqua Combs. "They are the only device that will remove desert dust and concrete dust from new or repaired pools."

Aqua Combs are 100% made in the USA.

Contact: Aqua Comb/Mi-Way | aquacomb.com



Swim Series S150

The all-new Swim Series by Bullfrog Spas gives homeowners an upgraded backyard water experience unlike any other, says Jake Ricks, director of marketing at Bullfrog Spas.

The Swim Series S150 is designed to help users build endurance and strength with preset or customizable fitness programs, resistance training, and space for any number of low-impact, water-based workouts.

"No other product in the category offers the numerous therapy options available with the patented JetPak Therapy System," says Ricks. "Swim Series is built with legendary Bullfrog Spas quality and reliability, attractive aesthetics, features designed for an endless variety of uses, and a remarkably functional layout."

The unique splash pad area allows users to practice swimming, play games, or splash around. The spa also features an ample number of multilevel seats.

Contact: Bullfrog Spas | bullfrogspas.com



CCW25 AOP Spa System

Clear Comfort's AOP treatment is now available for all portable spas and swim spas. The CCW25 Spa System delivers a full-flow water treatment in a flexible design that's easy to integrate, use and enjoy.

In addition to guarding the health and wellness of spa owners, the CCW25 helps protect and extend the longevity of spa surfaces and equipment with non-corrosive spa water.

The CCW25 is designed to minimize the need for chlorine, bromine and other chemicals to healthier levels than drinking water. With low-touch water treatment, the CCW25 frees spa owners from toxic chemical handling.

Additionally, Clear Comfort's easy-to-use CCW25 introduces the company's fastest system maintenance method yet with a cartridge replacement that takes less than a minute every year.

Customer service can be reached at 303.872.477 ext. 2, support@clearcomfort.com or clearcomfort.com/help.

Contact: Clear Comfort | clearcomfort.com



DuraCore Spa Covers

Each component of a DuraCore cover is thoughtfully sourced and crafted for optimal performance and environmental responsibility, says Phil Saltzman, Meyco's director of sales.

"Standard vinyl and foam spa covers waste energy and end up in landfills in just a few years," Saltzman says. "DuraCore spa covers last far longer, are 90% recyclable, and can save literally tons of carbon over their lifetime."

Each DuraCore cover is crafted around a vapor resistant, polypropylene insulating core that doesn't gain weight or grow mold like the typical polystyrene. Each cover is structured on lightweight aluminum channels with a polycarbonate base.

Covers are available in 9 shades made with a material that is designed to be vapor wicking and will not crack or fade prematurely.

DuraCore covers come with a 5-year warranty that specifically covers water weight gain.

Contact: Meyco Pool Covers | meycocoverters.com/spa-covers/



Serena Spa — Spa Care Kits

Serena Spa Kits contain the essentials needed for spa water care and are designed to make water care maintenance simple. The 30-day kits come in two sanitization options: Chlorine or Bromine.

Serena's Chlorine Program is the company's traditional granular dichlor that serves as an immediate sanitizer that rapidly dissolves and oxidizes organic materials and undesirable compounds, such as oils, cosmetics, perspiration, and more, from the water.

Serena's Bromine Program is the preferred indoor spa option with slow-dissolving brominating tabs that are effective over a broader pH range and reduce odors. They last longer and work better in warmer temperatures than chlorine.

Serena Spa Kits are made in the U.S.A. The manufacturer welcomes distributors.

Contact: Phoenix Products Co. | phoenixproductscsco.com

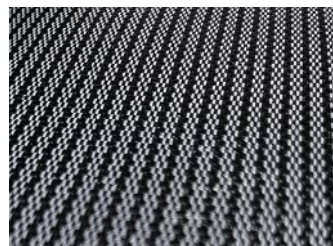


The Attendant

The Attendant is designed to control and monitor any pool equipment from existing manufacturers in the industry.

The cloud-based automation system continually monitors equipment, water quality and temperature to determine energy efficiency, and helps poolowners save money and lower their overall environmental impact.

Contact: Poolside Tech | poolside.tech



Spazazz Spa Lab Collection

Spazazz Spa Lab Collection, named a PSN Top 50 Product, includes four fragrances of crystals infused with CBD oil that focus on relaxation and calmness.

The THC-free blend of crystals is made with 100% all-natural hemp-based CBD, aroma therapeutic oils and Dead Sea Salts. CBD naturally assists with aches and pains, and is best for those who are tired and stressed-out or in need of a little self-care.

"Spazazz products have been found to elevate and energize mood, hydrate and exfoliate skin, reduce inflammation, lessen stress, and create calmness," says Angie Petro, Spazazz' president.

The crystals are all natural and will not affect the water chemistry.

Technical support is available by calling 801-785-4990.

For marketing materials, email info@spazazz.com

Contact: Spazazz | spazazz.com

BaduJet Turbo Pro

The BaduJet Turbo Pro is the ultimate in resistance swimming, says Chris Calise, customer service manager at Speck Pumps - Pool Products.

"An intuitive new design allows for a more than three-fold increase in flow over our standard swimjets," Calise says. "Combined with simple underwater push button controls and a quiet, efficient variable speed motor, the BaduJet Turbo Pro takes your swim to the next level."

The BaduJet Turbo Pro requires no plumbing, and are simple to install. A large propeller draws water directly from the pool, eliminating the need for pipes or pumps. The system is completely variable speed and significantly quieter than previous BADU SwimJet Systems. The BaduJet Turbo Pro push 1,500 gallons per minute.

Technical support is available by calling 800-223-8535.

The BaduJet Turbo Pro comes with a 2-year warranty.

Contact: Speck Pumps - Pool Products | usa.speck-pumps.com

New Gray Mesh Covers

Tara Pool and Outdoor Products introduces their upgraded Regular and HD Mesh Safety Covers in stylish gray.

"We have had many customers requests gray mesh fabric recently so now that it is available they have been very happy to have that option available," says Thomas Kennedy, Tara's marketing director.

Tara's Regular Mesh offers easy installation and quick water drainage, while the HD Mesh is designed to prevent algae growth by providing 99% shade.

Both covers feature heavy-duty springs, stainless steel hardware, solid brass anchors, and double-layer webbing.

Mesh covers come with a 15-year limited warranty.

For questions, contact Tara by email: sales@taramfg.com.

Contact: Tara Pool & Outdoor Products | tarapools.com



Ultra Vinyl Privacy

Ultra's Vinyl Privacy utilizes a heavy-duty aluminum frame that accepts any standard 7/8" thick vinyl tongue and groove board.

The combination of four possible frame colors and countless options for vinyl boards results in virtually limitless color combinations. Unlike most fence products, Ultra's Vinyl Privacy offers homeowners the opportunity to customize their fence without paying the high prices normally associated with customization.

"Without a doubt, the overall aesthetics and flexibility of design is the best thing about this product," says Ben Jodoin, who handles sales for Ultra Aluminum. "The consensus amongst users of this product is that it has a unique combination of beauty, and performance, plus it can be used in varied applications."

Both of the materials used require little to no maintenance. The product is backed by a limited lifetime warranty.

Contact: Ultra Aluminum Mfg. Inc.
| ultrafence.com



Pump Shut-off System/ SVRS

Vacless' VGB-compliant SVRSs feature an electrical pump shut-off system with an alarm or siren, which instantly turns the pump off upon entrapment.

The SVRS is automatically resettable in 3 minutes, and features no nonsense programming, no false tripping, choice of air or no-air induction, and no by-passing for pool vacuum cleaning.

It installs in 5 minutes onto the pump in place of the suction side drain plug without the use of tools, and is designed for use with pumps of up to 25 horsepower.

"The best thing about this product is the easy installation, no nonsense programming and unquestioned reliability," says Hassan Hamza, Vacless' president.

Marketing materials and technical support are available.

The units are covered under a 3-year warranty.

Contact: Vacless Systems |
vacless.com

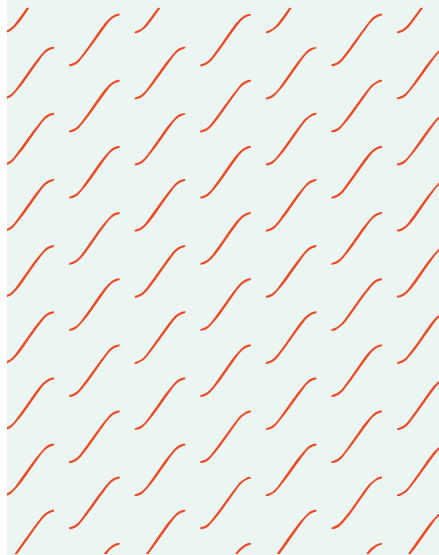
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New Products

BY PSN STAFF



Natural Chemistry

For a limited time, Natural Chemistry will offer a retail display rack for its line of high-end spa water treatment products. The display rack is available to those purchasing 12 cases of any mix of NC spa product available in the product line, from maintenance and remedy product to balancing and sanitizing products.

Contact: naturalchemistry.com



Poolside by CGT

Poolside by CGT's PVC membrane program is now a preferred equipment provider for the Master Pools Guild. The reinforced membrane system serves as both a waterproofing and surface finish for commercial and residential swimming pool applications that requires practically no cure time.

Contact: poolsidebycgt.com



RENOLIT

RENOLIT now offers a new finish called ALKORPLAN-TOUCH-Sublime. This new, 80-mil-thick, textured membrane is inspired by nature and imitates the look and feel of travertine limestone. The membrane can be used for new pool and spa construction or renovates leaking or deteriorated pools and spas.

Contact: renolit-alkorplan.com



Waterco USA

Waterco's new HRVR Retro Fit Series filter was specifically engineered for HMA applications and can be a direct replacement for Pentair's Triton. It is constructed from anti-corrosive, nontoxic materials with an 8-inch neck opening for ease of access to internals.

Contact: waterco.com



Life's a beach
and then you cover your pool



Brass Components



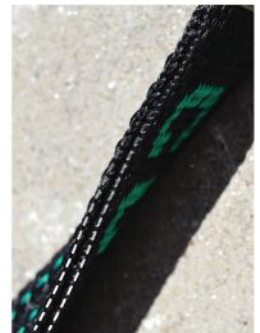
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