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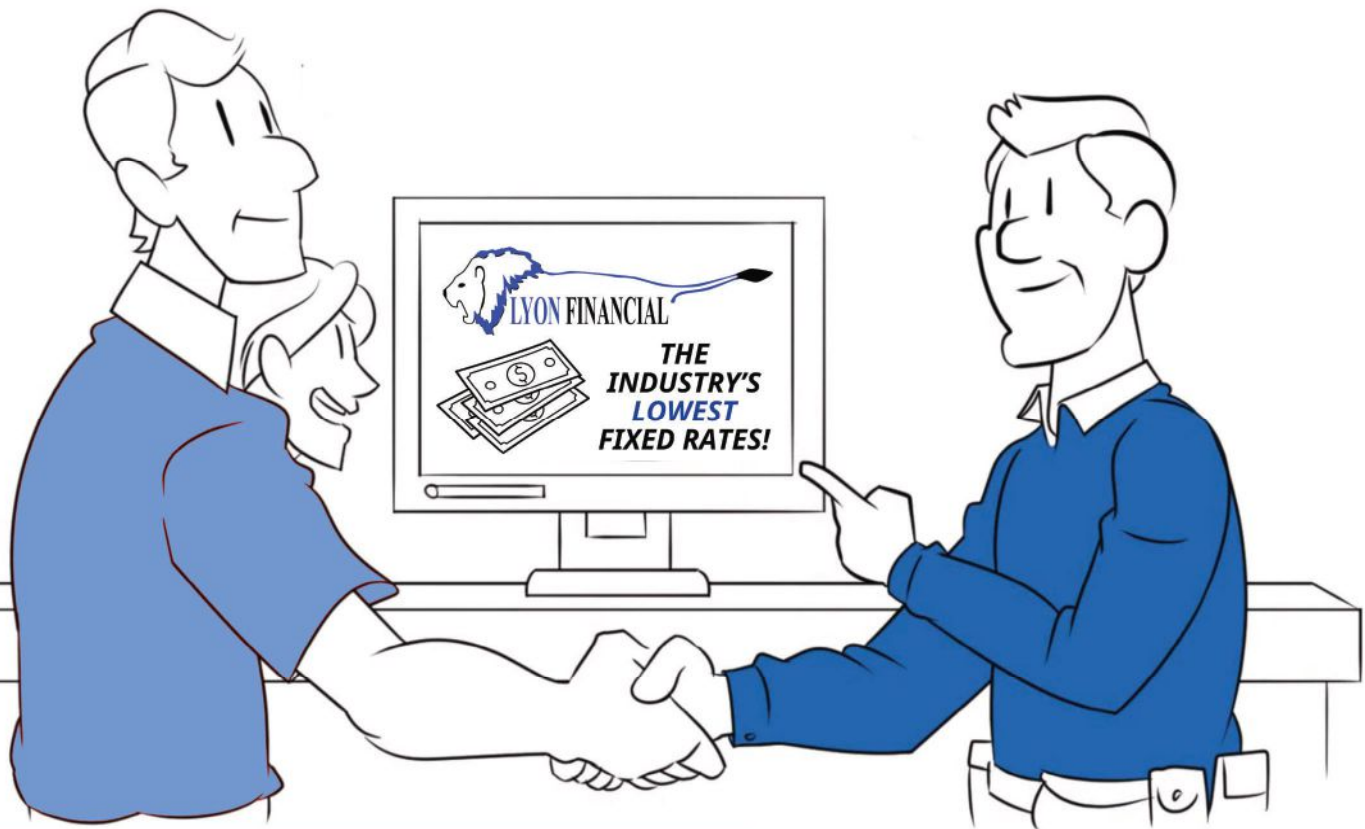
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POOL AND SPA NEWS

NEW STRATEGIES
FOR A NEW ERA

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ABOVE LEFT: POOL NATION
ABOVE RIGHT: ADOBESTOCK

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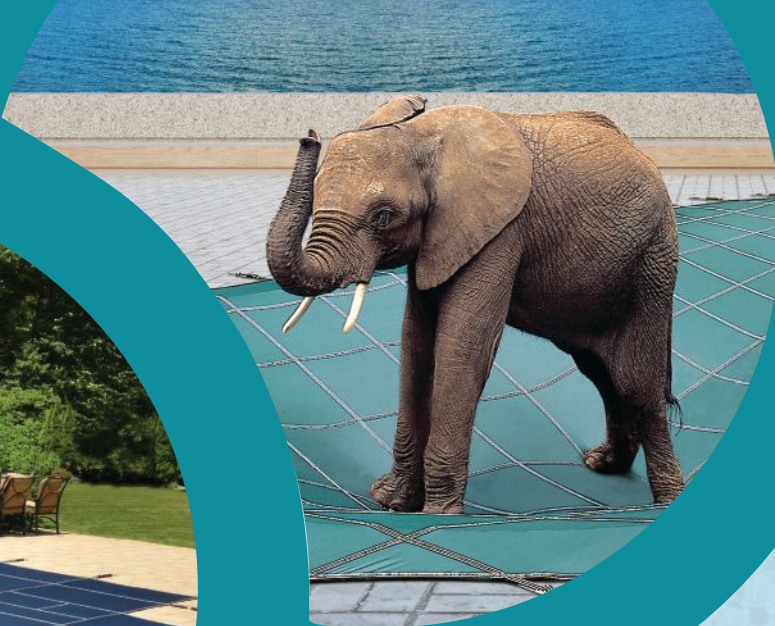
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An Attitude of Gratitude to ... COVID?



Joanne McClain
Editor-in-Chief, PSN

I don't know about you, but I am so sick of COVID. I'm over it — I don't want to think about it, worry about it, or write about it. It's lived rent-free in my head for far too long. It's time to serve it eviction papers!

But I realized not too long ago that I'm actually profoundly grateful to the bug. In fact, I think it may have saved my life.

Let me explain.

The early days of the pandemic were truly terrifying for me and my family. The most vulnerable population and most at risk of dying from COVID-19 were the elderly, the immunocompromised and those with chronic health conditions, such as heart, lung or kidney diseases, diabetes, obesity, cancer, etc. (This is still true.)

With our multiple health issues, my husband and I pretty much hit the jackpot in terms of being at high risk. If we were to contract COVID and die, what would happen to our son? We have no family nearby.

The only solution was to get a handle on my health issues — I had been ignoring my Type 2 diabetes diagnosis for too long, and what I was doing wasn't working. I went to my doctor at the end of 2020, and then added an endocrinologist the next year to help me come up with a plan to get my blood sugar under control.

Since then, I've made systematic changes and carefully followed the plan devised by my doctors. As a result, my A1C (the test used to measure your average blood sugar levels) has gone from a dangerously high 11 to a more normal 5.7. In addition, I physically feel so much better — I no longer have migraines or feel lethargic all the time, for example — but most importantly,

I'm no longer at risk for so many health issues. And for that peace of mind, I have COVID to thank. I'm optimistic that the changes I've made are ones that have turned into healthy habits that will serve me the rest of my life.

Similarly, many of our stalwart pool and spa businesses have responded to COVID's wide-reaching economic effects to great success. Whether it was addressing the constantly changing supply-chain issues, the incredible surge in demand and subsequent downturn, or finding ways to secure customer loyalty amidst unprecedented inflation, many of these business leaders saw opportunities to make profound changes to their business model, operations or staffing. These decisions have, in many cases, increased revenue, efficiency or customer service, and promises to have a direct impact on the future of their business.

The key to their success? Planning. I invite you to read our series of profiles in this issue, "New Strategies for a New Era," by Deputy Editor Rebecca Robledo, to learn how seven such pool and spa company leaders — from all sectors of the industry — have managed to pivot from the challenges COVID threw their way and lead their companies to greater success in a post-COVID world.

The series continues online through a generous sponsorship by Heritage Pool Supply Group, so be sure to subscribe to *PSN/AI Insider*, our monthly newsletter, for the next few profiles.


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Competition for Texas Service Business Increases with More Consolidators

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO



Texas, the hotbed of pool/spa service consolidation, has gained another competitor. Austin-based Poolie recently received private-equity backing to help it expand through the state.

“Our goal is to be the biggest service company in Texas,” said Leslie Elliott, the company’s CEO. “It’ll take some time to get there.”

This is the second company to make such an announcement this fall. Dallas-based Gold Medal Pools recently brought on a second private equity backer and now seeks to expand outside the Lone Star State. (To learn more, see page 19.)

Poolie was founded in 2021 by Elliott, who had decided to start a small business after running revenue and operations teams for a skilled trades platform in Austin. She decided to enter

the industry after purchasing a pool of her own. “We were one of many people who put a pool in in 2021 with Covid and were kind of astonished how hard it was to find good service,” she said. “We had a brand-new pool that was having consistent issues. [It seemed like] a space where I felt like there could be better service delivery and better customer service.”

She began by acquiring a small Austin-area service firm that managed approximately 150 pools with three technicians. It has since grown to a 1,200-plus-customer company.

In her first 18 months, Elliott said, she worked in every position except repair tech. “I really got my hands dirty and feel like I got a good understanding of the different levers and opportunities in the business,” she said.

Where Poolie had focused on Austin, it plans to venture into other parts of Texas with its private-equity backing. It plans to do this organically as well as through acquisition, Elliott said. Most immediately, it is exploring the San Antonio and Waco areas. There, the company is building a management team and plans to grow organically. Shortly after, it expects to enter the Dallas and Houston markets through acquisition.

“Many of us agree that Texas is a good place to do business,” said Jim Sharpe, Head of Partner and Propel Strategy for Poolie’s private-equity investor, Unity Partners.

Poolie currently employs approximately 40. As it acquires others, employee incentive plans will give staffers a stake in the company.

“As the equity value of the business grows, all of them have a stake in that growth,” Sharpe said.

Sharpe said Unity Partners chose to invest in the pool/spa industry because it seeks opportunities in fragmented service industries. “We look across industries where people are the main asset of the business and where there’s a high level of fragmentation, and where bringing businesses together can bring better [results],” he said.

He believes there’s plenty of room for more players in the market. “There are certainly many [consolidators] in the service industry,” Sharpe said. “But we believe the pool service space is pretty early on in terms of growth and maturity.”

California Industry Alarmed by Proposed, Permanent Water Reductions

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO



Measures in California meant to force a reduction in water use have left the industry fearing potential ramifications for pool/spa ownership.

The California State Water Resources Control Board plans to decrease the amount it will allow water districts to supply. If implemented, it would start next year with a reduction of 17% and continue decreasing over time. In 2030, it would reduce allotments by 37% of current usage, with a 45% decrease expected in 2035.

Meant to discourage lawns and other irrigated plantings, the move is untenable for existing pools, said

Scott Cohen, chairman of the California Pool and Spa Association.

“My swimming pool will not use any less water than it uses today,” he said. “If you’re already covering it, I don’t know how you do any better.”

If water districts exceed their limit, they are subject to \$10,000 per day in penalties, which Cohen expects will be passed on to homeowners. “You’re saying middle-class people can’t afford a pool anymore,” Cohen said.

Further, CPSA said pools should not be treated the same as softscapes, since pools have been shown to use less water than lawns and other plants.

“... It does not factor in the huge reduction in current water deliveries because of the installation of pools and associated hardscape and fixtures installed to enhance the pool project,” CPSA said in a press release. “Those areas of the project are taken out of irrigation forever, saving an estimated 120,000-acre feet of water annually. That number grows every year with the installation of new swimming pools.”

CPSA has filed comments explaining this, as well as the effects on the pool/spa industry and jobs. The Board is required to respond. CPSA expects hearings in the future.

Poolwerx Enters Minnesota and Wisconsin

A new agreement places the service and retail franchise Poolwerx in the Minnesota and Wisconsin markets.

The company recently signed with Performance Pool & Spa, which has eight locations — seven in Minnesota and one in Wisconsin.

Tom MacNally, who served as operations manager for Performance Pool & Spa, now will oversee the locations under the Poolwerx banner.

MacNally said the company entered into the agreement to help fulfill its wishes to continue growing. Under the Poolwerx brand, it plans to add one to two locations throughout the Midwest each year.

Aquatic Firms Merge

A national aquatics firm has been formed through the merger of two large players in the industry.

Denver-based private equity firm Bow River Capital purchased and merged Westport Pools of St. Louis with Progressive Commercial Aquatics of Houston. Together called Landmark Aquatic, the company will offer a range of aquatics facility services across the country, including design and engineering, construction, maintenance, renovation, and chemical supply.

“The unification of Westport and Progressive into Landmark Aquatic strengthens both businesses and provides the market with a one-stop-shop for any and all commercial aquatic needs,” said Bow River Managing Director Greg Hiatrides.

Water Tech Named Best Place to Work

Water Tech Corp. earned the title “Best Place to Work” from the *NJ Business Journal* for the second consecutive year. The manufacturer won in the category of smaller companies. “We are so proud to win this award for the second time in a row,” said Founder and President Guy Erlich. “The employees at Water Tech are a family and we have a lot of fun together making it a great place to work.”



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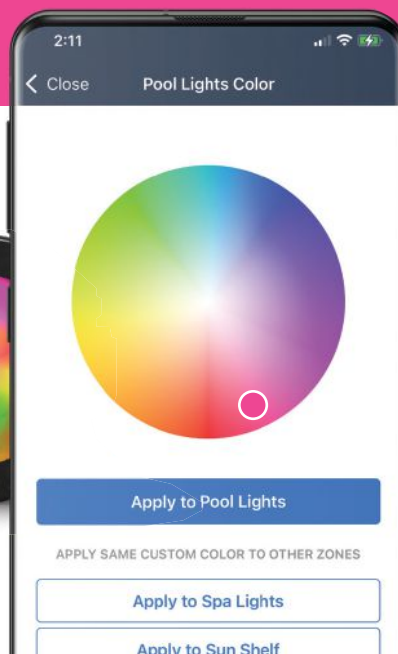
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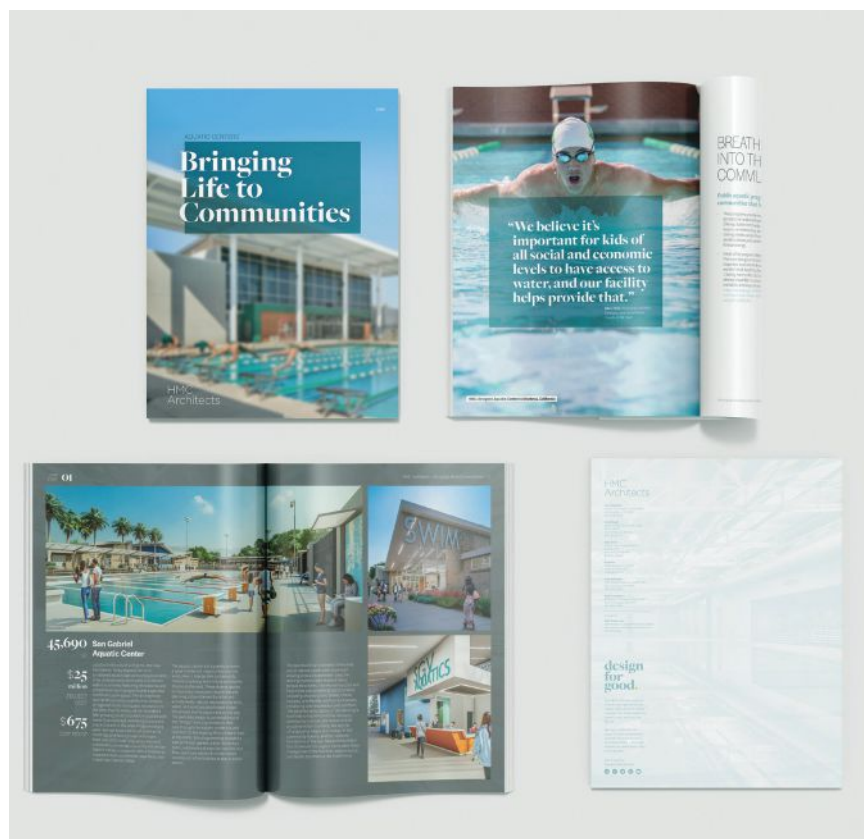


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A Healthy Message

This firm crafted a paper to help it advocate for aquatics in communities

BY BRUCE W. BOUL



According to the National Institutes of Health, health equity is where everyone can attain full health potential regardless of social position or any other socially defined circumstance. Unfortunately, the burdens of disease and the benefits of wellness are inequitably distributed with negative consequences for the nation's well-being and prosperity.

Community aquatic facilities are vital in filling this gap and creating

a more equitable future for people in diverse neighborhoods where significant space, economic or climate challenges limit swimming pool access.

Unfortunately, not enough municipalities are aware of this.

To communicate the value of water and aquatics, HMC Architects recently developed a 24-page impact paper, "Aquatic Centers: Bringing Life to Communities." It explores the critical role aquatic and recreation centers

play in society — and how they can make a lasting, positive impact on the people they serve. The report provides an effective tool for conveying our message and initiating a broader dialogue.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Our ethos is to "Design for good." We only take projects that we know will make a positive impact in a community. So we like to talk about aquatic and recreation centers, and why they're so beneficial. Our impact paper is one of the ways that we can do that.

Aquatic spaces are far more than just leisure facilities; they serve as epicenters for social interaction, physical health, and mental rejuvenation. When you look at communities with these centers, you'll see better case studies for wellness — both physical and mental health. Citizens derive so many great benefits from places where they can exercise and connect with other community members. For instance, they are great to help with loneliness.

Despite this immense potential, many municipalities have yet to fully appreciate the intricacies of aquatic design and its contribution to community wellness. Even in California, where you'd think that it's sunny all the time so everybody has access to swimming and recreation, a large swath of the population just doesn't.

Many miss even the safety benefits of providing a place where children learn to swim. So these centers

PHOTO COURTESY HMC ARCHITECTS

aren't always prioritized in the limited budgets that many municipalities have. We want to provide them all the information so they can make sound decisions when budgeting and planning.

One of the report's key takeaways is the multifaceted impact of aquatic centers on mental health. In an era marked by stress and anxiety, these centers emerge as sanctuaries of solace. The interplay of water, light and space creates an atmosphere conducive to relaxation and introspection. Swimming has been scientifically linked to reduced cortisol levels and heightened release of endorphins — the so-called 'feel-good' hormones. Aquatic centers empower communities to navigate the challenges of modern existence by offering a respite from the rigors of daily life.

Furthermore, the HMC paper sheds light on the integrative role of these centers in fostering social cohesion. In an increasingly digital world, face-to-face interactions are at a premium. Aquatic and recreation centers provide a physical space where people from diverse backgrounds can converge, interact and form meaningful connections. Whether through water aerobics classes, swim meets, or simply lounging poolside, these spaces cultivate a sense of belonging crucial for holistic well-being.

These centers even create better neighbors. I understand this firsthand: We have a community center with an aquatics facility, and we run into neighbors whom we might not otherwise see. So these centers do such a great job connecting people, and those connections help people live more fulfilling lives.

However, it's important to note that the impact of aquatic and recreation centers isn't solely confined within their walls, so our paper emphasizes the ripple effect these spaces can have on their surroundings. From

increased property values to enhanced community pride, these facilities catalyze broader urban renewal.

By investing in aquatic design, municipalities stand to gain not just in terms of health dividends but also in the economic vitality of the region.

HELPFUL TOOL

In the paper, we highlight aquatic and recreation centers' myriad benefits by delving into the symbiotic relationship between architecture, human behavior, and well-being. It explains the benefits of aquatics, backed by

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facts and data from agencies such as the CDC, along with quotes from past clients on how their communities benefit from their aquatic facilities. Then we outline case histories of some of our projects.

We recognize that getting our message across necessitates more than just words on paper. We are sparking conversations through its strategic dissemination across social media platforms, our website and our direct engagement with clients, partners and local officials.

The report certainly provides us a business-development tool to be used in client meetings, not only to show our capabilities, but also to tout the many reasons why aquatic centers benefit communities. We also provide it to many of our current and potential clients to help them advocate for these spaces when engaging

Impact papers like this provide an invaluable resource for municipalities seeking evidence-based solutions to urban challenges. By demonstrating how aquatic and recreation centers can transform communities, we are arming decision-makers with the insights needed to make informed choices that resonate for generations.

with community leaders and local officials. We also made it available on our website, where it can be downloaded for free to those interested in this type of design.

As advocates for community wellness, we have found that impact papers like this provide an invaluable resource for municipalities seeking evidence-based solutions to urban challenges. By demonstrating how aquatic and recreation centers can transform communities, we are arming decision-makers with the insights needed to make informed choices that resonate for generations.

Bruce W. Boul is communications director of HMC Architects, based in Los Angeles. The impact paper, "Aquatic Centers: Bringing Life to Communities," can be found at hmcarchitects.com.



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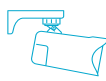


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Gold Medal Pools is the latest company seeking to go national with private equity backing. Hear what its CEO has to say.

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO

Among the consolidators that have been spreading across markets and states through acquisition, there's been a more stealthy operator.

Gold Medal Pools, a Dallas-based construction and service firm, began purchasing companies two years ago with the backing of private equity. While the focus has been residential service, some of the acquired companies offer new-pool construction as well.

Recently Gold Medal reached a new watershed — taking on a second private-equity investor, making its 21st acquisition, and expanding its focus not only outside the Dallas area, but into other Sunbelt states.

“[We’re] in pretty serious talks with folks in a handful of states right now,” says the company’s CEO, Josh Sandler.

It plans to approach each new market by first purchasing an established, well-regarded company to serve as a regional hub, then building upon that.

So far, the company has mostly purchased operations servicing 300 to 1,000 pools per week. In its negotiations, it works with the sellers to determine whether they will continue to play a role or if they want to step away.

To standardize practices, Gold Medal has developed a learning management system and a training time line to gradually transition acquirees into the company’s way of doing things.

Here, we learn more about Gold Medal Pools and its CEO.

PSN: Where were you born and raised?

Sandler: Dallas. Been here my whole life.

PSN: How did you get in the pool/spa industry?

Sandler: I have been in the industry

my whole life.

My family started in the early ’70s in the pool construction space. My father, Steve Sandler, built a company up in the North Texas market and sold it in the early ’90s.

I spent a lot of time in the business. I started on the construction side more than 30 years ago, while I was in my mid-to-late teens. I started doing hard labor ... No free passes here.

I then graduated from University of Texas with degrees in corporate communications and business. At that point, I really saw the business in a different light.

I’ve always had jobs on my own as well. When I was in business school, I worked for a tech incubator. I spent a lot of time as a machine operator — operating machines and waiting tables got me through college.

My Dad founded Gold Medal Pools in 1997. When we started, it was three employees. It really had a residential-construction focus, because that’s what we knew at the time. Although I still worked a lot of hard labor and construction for many years, I spent a lot of time growing the business and building a sustainable platform.

I bought into the company over time. My father and I were partners for many years. When he retired in 2019, we were able to use private equity as a legacy-planning tool for our family, as well as a growth tool.

PSN: What made you stay in the pool/spa industry?

Sandler: It’s a wonderful business, a wonderful industry. There aren’t so many places where you start with happy people and all you need to do is keep them happy. It’s been wonderful dealing with clients and seeing their dreams come true in their backyard, and to be able to build lifetime relationships with them.

From the business side, I’ve really enjoyed being able to build something of scale that builds value and wealth for families and employees, and for everyone who’s involved.

PSN: How did Gold Medal Pools evolve?

Sandler: About 15 years ago, I started a commercial division. We started with small-scale commercial pools, then progressed to building very large-scale projects. About 10 years ago, we started really focusing on service and maintenance. We continued to grow all three lines — residential construction, commercial construction, then service and maintenance.

In about 2015 we started doing some real legacy planning for the business, figuring out how certain people could retire, and how we could achieve maximum liquidity from the business, as opposed to what you just make on a daily basis.

In 2019, we did a minority recapitalization with a private equity firm. From there we really started to focus on professionalizing the business, building processes, procedures, and good measurements that really allowed us to scale the business, keep a good eye on it and make the best decisions possible.

When the large freeze hit here in 2021, that really opened our eyes to a lot of opportunity in the service and maintenance side. So we went down the road of acquiring service and maintenance companies. Over the next 18 months or so, we bought 16 companies. Then we paused to take all our lessons learned, and really evaluate the business and each line of the business on its own merits.

We brought in operational consultants, and really got down to the nuts and bolts of the business to measure each piece, from the service technician

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As a young man in business, you want to do everything for everybody. As I gained experience and built processes and leadership with a wonderful team around me, I really focused on burning calories in the spots that bring the most value.

we just hired to the CEO. That allowed us to feel very comfortable about continuing to scale.

We started overlaying and piecing everything together, and we found the most valuable for us was residential construction paired with our service and maintenance division. So we found a buyer for the commercial line of business.

We really believe in the power of focus and finding a handful of things that you can perfect, and we found ourselves burning the most calories for the least amount of long-term enterprise value on the commercial side.

We went through another recapitalization. Our original partners stayed in, and we recapitalized with another partner.

PSN: What has been one of the most important lessons you've learned as you've grown your company?

Sandler: As a young man in business, you want to do everything for everybody. As I gained experience and built processes and leadership with a wonderful team around me, I really focused on burning calories in the spots that bring the most value.

We see a significant difference between value and profit. Ours is a very profitable company, but we think we've also created the right business mix to generate the maximum amount of long-term value, which is what I think creates sustainability in the business, as well as opportu-

nities for our sellers, employees and stockholders.

It's a bit of a space race right now [among consolidators], but we think the way we're going about it is going to generate the most value as opposed to a project-based business.

PSN: What have you learned about consolidation in this industry?

Sandler: We've learned a lot about the tolerance of people in general for change. I think if it's communicated well and even overcommunicated, I think people are amazing. It's our job to be diligent and to communicate and overcommunicate to make sure people are informed.

Change is necessary for growth, but Rule No. 1 is "Do no harm" — to employees or clients. Just because we have a track record now and have been successful at [acquisitions], it does not mean we can come in on Day 1 and make significant changes. The result of that is turnover and attrition, which is not what we want. We've learned a lot about patience and tolerance. There's way more to a business than the numbers on a profit and loss statement.

SANDLER'S TAKES

PSN: What's your favorite thing about your job?

Sandler: Dealing with people, no question. Getting to learn about different people's walks of life and hearing how they got to where they are. I love hearing people's stories.

PSN: What's your favorite motto or saying?

Sandler: Every time somebody asks me how I'm doing, I say, "I'm better than I deserve." I feel grateful and thankful to be in a position to have the opportunity to be part of such a great industry and great business.

PSN: What's the most important thing you do to maintain focus and energy?

Sandler: Exercise, exercise, exercise. It's just phenomenal for maintaining health, and I think it's a big piece for mental health.

The most important thing is a healthy and balanced lifestyle and surrounding yourself with great people. It takes a village of like-minded people to build something great, and knowing you have that kind of support, companionship and trust, to keep your good people is just really the good to great moment.

PSN: What's your favorite business book?

Sandler: We spend quite a bit of time going through books in our leadership meetings. The latest one that comes to mind is "Extreme Ownership" by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin. It shows that every piece of the process is important from the top to the bottom. As long as everybody has focus and extreme ownership of their piece of the puzzle, then success is imminent.

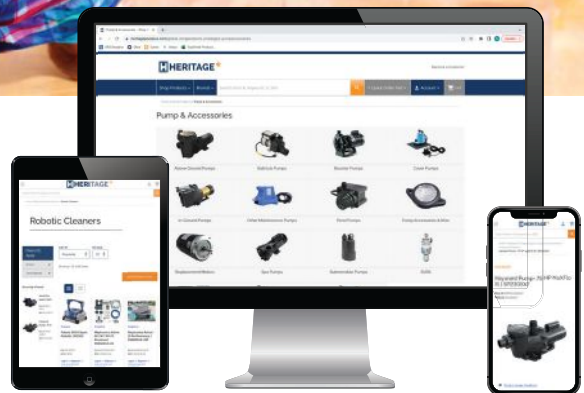
PSN: Who would you consider your personal role model? What's the most important thing they taught you?

Sandler: Obviously my Dad was a huge role model. He taught me to work hard and do the right thing by people.



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PSN Asks

POOL NATION

The trio behind the popular service-tech podcast discuss their vision, career journeys and some of their favorites.

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO

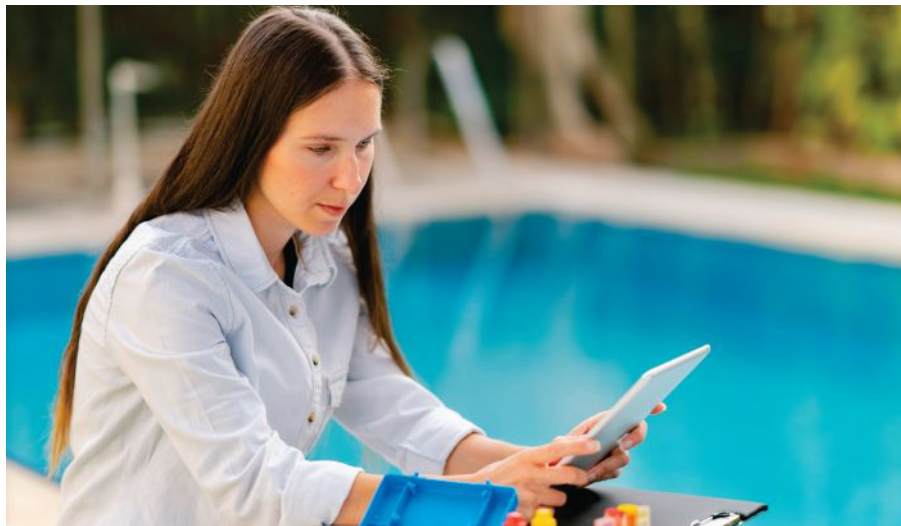
PHOTO COURTESY POOL NATION





THREE TIPS TO IMPROVE SERVICE PROFITS

How mobile technology is helping pool and spa service businesses thrive



The past two pool seasons have emphasized the importance of having mobile software solutions to thrive in today's business environment. With resources stretched thin, business software should be accessible on any mobile device to support staff and provide better customer service. Pool professionals agree that there are several industry-specific mobile technology solutions that can instantly reduce business stressors and help pool and spa businesses thrive. Here are three 'Pro Tip' solutions that will positively impact operations and customer service almost immediately.

Tip 1- Increase efficiency using 'paperless' mobile solutions in the field

Service technicians are extremely busy testing water, cleaning pools, or replacing parts and equipment—so they shouldn't have to deal with the additional steps of bringing paperwork back to the home office or call to ask about inventory. Eliminate service forms, record pool or spa water test results, take payments at the jobsite, look up inventory, and even perform physical inventory tasks on service trucks—all through a phone or tablet. With 'mobile live service' technicians have immediate access to all the updates completed at the office and the office is instantly up to date with their tasks.

By using "mobile live service" technicians can operate more efficiently in the field by using their mobile phone or tablet for everything they can do at their offices. This allows service technicians to easily view scheduled jobs alongside other information such as equipment profile, job notes, directions, and pictures on record. There are even mobile water testing apps where technicians can test the water, record the results, and input a complete profile, including photos of the pool, the pump room, and its backyard surroundings.

Tip 2- Improve cashflow with Mobile Service Billing and Payment options

Mobile billing and payment options have become essential for getting paid. Mobile billing allows service technicians to ensure fast, efficient, and accurate service billing. The ability to process mobile payments provides clients with the convenience of paying online or from a mobile device. Pool and spa professionals using mobile online billing and online bill pay options eliminate the time of duplicate entries, saving money on labor and supplies and more importantly can bill and collect payments in the field.

Tip 3- Use Mobile Inventory Management on every service truck

Inventory control is a key component in running a lean and profitable business. Using new mobile technology helps you tighten logistics, manage cycle counts, and gain more control over inventory on service trucks. These tools can help you avoid inventory inaccuracies, missed sales, lost income, and surprising shortages. This makes managing products, including transferring stock from trucks to store or between trucks, far easier.



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- Providing constant access to information with a mobile app

The use of mobile apps has made it easier to deliver exceptional service, even during the busy season. Now is the time to embrace mobile technology to ensure your pool and spa business thrives.

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Pool Nation, which started as a podcast in 2020 has become not only an industry media sensation, but a full-blown educational institution, with the ambition of becoming more as it progresses.

In its three short years, the trio of pool-service professionals has expanded the organization to also host an awards program dedicated to promoting and elevating the pool/spa service segment, as well as sponsoring a women's summit. The co-founders and co-hosts — John Chakalis, Edgar De Jesus and Zac Nicklas — are increasing their presence at industry conference programs. And, most recently, partnering with several vendors to operate a smartphone app that hosts virtually all of its seminars and videos for quick reference and education.

Here, we talked to the trio about their vision and things they've picked up throughout their professional journeys.

PSN: How did the three of you come together?

DeJesus: In Spring of 2020 I started doing Instagram Lives, answering questions sent in by pool pros. They kind of took off. We had a lot of people tuning in every Wednesday. I met Zac through the Instagram Lives, and we hit it off. Zac charged high rates for his services, and a lot of pros had questions about how to do that. At one point, I wanted to do some Instagram Lives on borates, and I was introduced to John. We did two episodes on borates. We all hit it off like high school buddies who hadn't talked in 15 years.

We were asked to do the Lives in a podcast format so pros could listen more easily on the job. I said, "I'll call John and Zac, and if all three of us can't do it, it's a no." We had formed a great bond, and all our visions aligned.

Plus, we were all in a different place in our businesses, so we could offer different points of view. We don't always agree on how things need to be done, but it gives different perspective to our listeners.

Over time we've figured out who we are and what our spiritual mission is. We want to better the industry, and the way we do that is making sure pool pros are financially successful. If we can help them do that, everything else will start to fall into place. And it's our job to create a safe space in the industry — an environment where people can ask any question.

PSN: What industry gap were you trying to fill?

Nicklas: We recognized that education in our industry is very fragmented. Whether you're a business owner trying to get employees trained, or you're out there doing it yourself, it's hard to break away to attend training. From my perspective, trying to find training to engage my team and help them improve their craft, it would be hard because I'd have to source YouTube videos and vet them. Or I'd have to register at a website, and my employees would have to register under my registration. So there were barriers. We thought there was a need for a hub with more centralized education, and more education.

PSN: Where do you think pool pros need the most help in learning to run their businesses?

Nicklas: I think the first thing pool pros need to understand is that you're running a business. It's not just a job. That's a transition I had to make after starting my company. My business partner and

I had been spinning our wheels. We were making money but not really growing. We were surviving financially. We were just creating full-time jobs for ourselves. In 2017, I went through a business program that opened my eyes to the fact that there is a lot more to it. The company needed structure and a budget, we needed to be looking at our expenses and finances. We started focusing on the financial success portion of it — getting comfortable with your accounting, learning what a profit and loss statement is and how you can utilize it.

PSN: Since starting Pool Nation, what were the biggest lessons you've learned about the industry and its professionals?

DeJesus: It is a huge community. We get a lot of people who are very, very smart. And when you go seek help, there are a lot of people who are really willing to help — they'll take the shirts off their backs. You have to go seek those relationships and partnerships, but you can have two competitors help each other because they believe they're going to be more successful if they're working together. You don't see that in a lot of industries.

PSN: What would you say are the biggest challenges for the pool/spa service sector right now?

Nicklas: Now that we're in a post-COVID economy, with a lot of inflation, consumers are really starting to look at their budgets and be more conscientious about spending money. As an industry we're going to have to work for it again — relying on good sales practices and good customer service to differentiate ourselves.



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Chakalis: There's still a lack of respect for what we do, the importance of it and the skills and knowledge required to do it properly.

PSN: Where are the biggest opportunities for the pool/spa service sector?

DeJesus: There's a generational change happening. A lot of the younger people coming into the industry are very hungry, and they want to do things different than they've been done through the years. Multiple parents come to me saying, "My child listens to the podcast or watches videos, and they're changing the way I look at things." These younger pros want to run their businesses like larger companies, and that helps them elevate their businesses — and the industry as a whole.

PSN: Pool Nation started as a podcast, and has grown into an educational operation. What are your plans for Pool Nation in the near future?

DeJesus: We don't want to be known only as an education platform. Ultimately our goal is to elevate the industry. We want to be the premier industry that everybody looks at. So we're looking at what things that we can do to that end.

Nicklas: Creating community is a big component, too. We'll keep working to create an environment of support and positivity.

POOL NATION TAKES

PSN: What was your first job? What lesson or skill did you learn there that you use to this day?

DeJesus: My mom and stepfather

opened a grocery store in the small town where I was raised. I worked there, and was treated like a regular employee. From that I learned the value of hard work. I saw my mother and stepfather work seven days a week to provide for their family, so I got my work ethic from them.

PSN: If you had a career before the pool industry, how did those skills and knowledge help you in the pool industry?

Chakalis: I worked in retail management. I've interacted with thousands of customers, hired and fired hundreds of employees. I've interviewed thousands as well. I was very familiar with labor laws and how to manage a profit and loss statement. It doesn't matter what industry you come from, they all have one thing in common — human beings. I've always been fascinated with people, their minds and what makes them tick. I believe if you can understand people, you can be great in any business you own or work for.

PSN: How old were you when you decided to go into business for yourself? Why did you want to have your own business?

Nicklas: I was 21 when I started my company, The Pool Boys. I grew up in a family of entrepreneurs. I think it was in my blood, just being around business and seeing it. When you're that age, one of the driving motivators is financial wealth. Now I really thrive on strategy and trying to figure out how to build processes. If we're having a recurring issue, what plans can we put in place to make sure it doesn't happen anymore?

Chakalis: I was 35 years old. In my previous career, I was doing very well financially, but I learned that money isn't everything. I was responsible for more than 150 employees, five salaried managers and over \$50 million in revenue. I was working six to seven days a week, 70-plus hours, and always on call. After about a decade, it took its toll on my family. I decided that preserving my family was more important than money and my career so I took a leap of faith and left to work for myself.

PSN: Why did you choose the pool industry?

Chakalis: One day, I was driving home, brainstorming ideas for a business to start, when I noticed a pool truck. Once I noticed it, in the 5-mile drive home, I saw at least 10 trucks. Every one looked terrible — all beat up and dirty. The closest thing they had to branding was their company name written in sharpie on an 8½-by-11-inch paper that was duct-taped to their truck door. At that moment, I knew there was an opportunity. I started my research when I got home. I spent more than a year studying, reading, learning the trade and getting any and all certifications I could before I officially published my website and turned on the phone for J&J Flawless Pools.

PSN: Tell me about the proudest day of your career, or your single biggest achievement.

Nicklas: It was my graduation day of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program. I'm naturally introverted, and I don't like speaking in front of people. It's something I've struggled with. But to pass the program, I had to give a

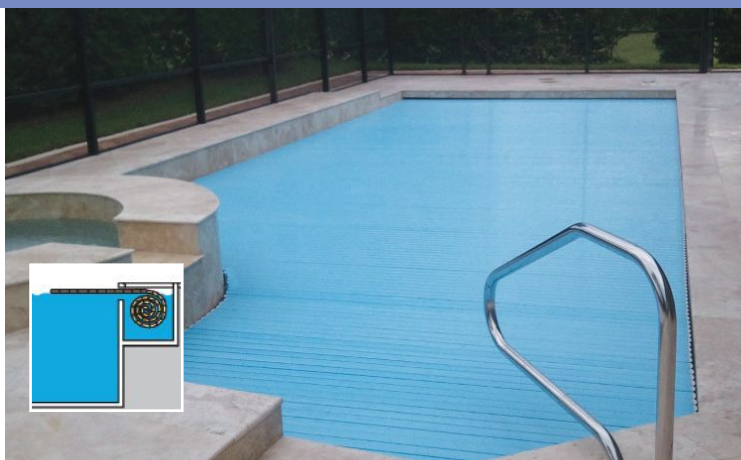
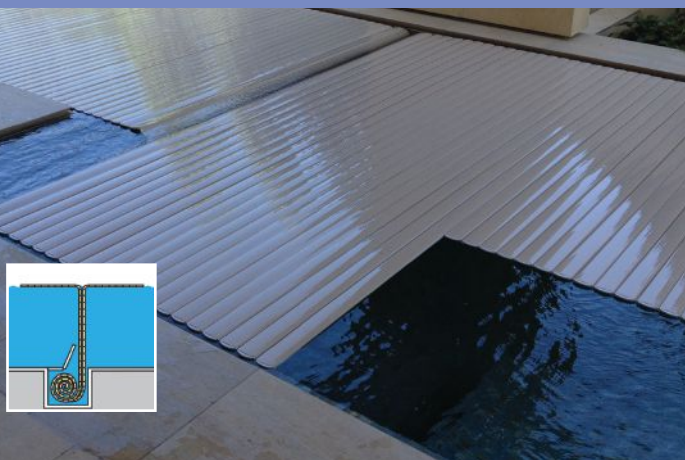


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final presentation in front of all my cohorts and instructors. It was very formal. I was scared and nervous. But I planned and prepared and practiced, and I knocked it out of the park. That was a huge stepping stone in my personal growth.

PSN: What is your motto or favorite saying? Why is it so meaningful?

Chakalis: “The hardest part about learning, is unlearning.” Bad habits die hard, and the ability to learn how to do things right the first time is so valuable.

Nicklas: “Operate with purpose and intention.” I wouldn’t call myself book smart or educated in the traditional sense, but one thing I do is

operate with purpose and intention. It’s been a successful tactic for me. Sometimes when opportunity comes along, people aren’t ready to take advantage of it, because they haven’t been preparing for it by operating with purpose and intention.

DeJesus: “Be the hardest working person in the room.” I think that goes back to watching my parents be as successful as they were because of their hard work. Throughout my career I’ve worked with very smart people, who I knew were a lot smarter than me. But I knew that if I was always the hardest worker in the room, I could succeed.

PSN: What’s your favorite business book? What is the most important thing you learned from it?

DeJesus: “Good to Great” by James Collins. One of the sayings that I’ve never forgotten is that you need the right people on the bus, and you have to make sure you get the wrong people off the bus. If you want to go from good to great it’s about having the right people on your team and managing them well.

Chakalis: “Who Moved My Cheese” by Spencer Johnson, because it shows how to embrace and deal with change.

Nicklas: “The E-Myth” by Michael Gerber. The book really talks about thinking like a business, and creating systems and procedures to provide a consistent level of service or whatever your company provides.

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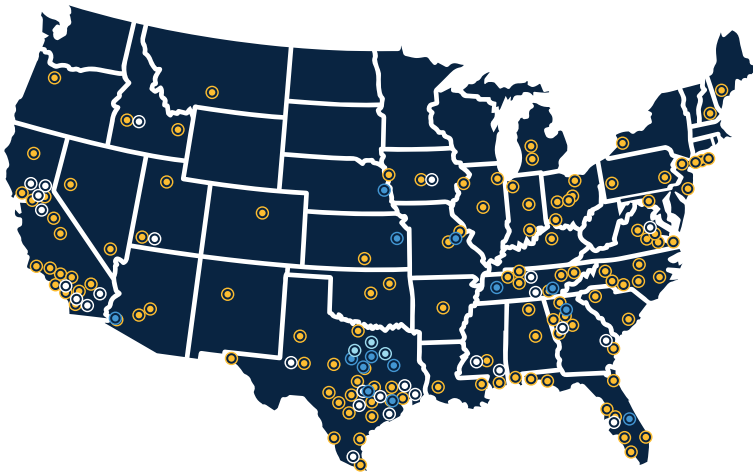
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New Strategies for a New Era

Pool and spa professionals share the big and small changes they've made to adapt to the times.

BY REBECCA ROBLEDÓ



Adjusting and adapting are a way of life in any business.

Especially in times like these.

Whether dealing with the temporary peaks and valleys brought on by the COVID pandemic and its aftermath, economic forces such as interest-rate hikes, or seemingly evergreen issues such as labor shortages, companies find themselves facing a strange mix of challenge and opportunity.

For the most responsive, these challenges are helping company owners fine-tune their operations to run at peak efficiency and profit. Small and large adjustments — from the addition of a new customer relationship management system (CRM), to a new staff structure, to seeking a different kind of customer — are positioning these firms for whatever happens next. Read about how seven *PSN* Top 50 firms are adapting to the times.



Investment in the Future

With staff fatigued after the pandemic and historic freezes of 2021, this company has placed the focus on becoming a better workplace.

Gohlke Pools hasn't seen big shifts in demand since entering the post-pandemic era.

There's still plenty of work to occupy the construction side, which generally builds about 55 high-end pools per year. "And our service department is pretty much recession-proof to a point," says Matt Gohlke, president of the Denton, Texas-based company, which ranks as a *PSN* Top 50 Builder and Top 50 Service company. "We haven't seen a lot of change."

Leads are slowing down a touch, but they're also higher-quality leads than before. "The main thing we've done [in response] is what we would do during good times — really trying to keep an eye on the financials," he says.

However, the company still faces some ripple effects from COVID-19. Primary among them — staffing issues.

To help move the company forward, it has focused on ways to motivate employees not only to stay, but also to recommend the company as an employer to friends.

PREVAILING ISSUE

Perhaps first and foremost, the company needed to address the issue of burnout.

"Our people are tired," Gohlke says. "The pandemic effect, then the freeze damage that we had a couple years ago, really wore our people out. So we've really tried to be aware of that and be aware of how important retention is and how important our people are."

To help, the company moved forward with a significant initiative — changing to a four-day work week in the off season for the company's 50 maintenance and repair technicians.

"We felt like they needed a break," Gohlke says. "Generally it's December through mid-March. It depends when the leaves fall."

The company can't have everybody gone the same days, so employees alternate. Those with more tenure get first choice, so they often take off Fridays or Mondays. Newer staff will take off a day in the middle of the week.

Crews must finish all their work in order for them to take the fifth day off.

The company also saw a need to address mental health with its employees, especially after somebody close to the staff took their own life. "We try to talk about mental health and have our department managers take more interest in what the employees do when they're away from here — if the employees want to talk about it," Gohlke says.

To help keep the staff physically ready for work, Gohlke Pools provides light breakfast foods such as breakfast bars, fruit, cereal and milk, every morning. In the hot months, staff can take sports drinks or protein drinks. At



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“We’ve been trying hard to be a really good place to work, where people like coming to work and are happy. What we do can be difficult work. But we try to do what we can to make it good.”

the monthly company meeting, the team receives a full breakfast, often sponsored by a vendor.

CREATING CONNECTION

Part of the goal is to create a sense of connection with the company and among the employees.

“We’ve been trying hard to be the type of place that’s a really good place to work, where people like coming to work and are happy,” Gohlke says. “What we do can be difficult work. But we try to do what we can to make it good.”

To this end, the staff also volunteers together as often as possible. Not only does this help Gohlke Pools show up as a good citizen in the community, but it furthers bonds among staff as they get out of the daily grind and focus on a higher good.

“We’re trying to focus on more things than just work and customers,” Gohlke says.

These efforts have paid off, he says, helping to stave off the staffing shortages experienced by most.

“If you take care of your people, they can make a good living for you. Then they tell their friends and when we have an opening we usually don’t have any trouble finding somebody.”

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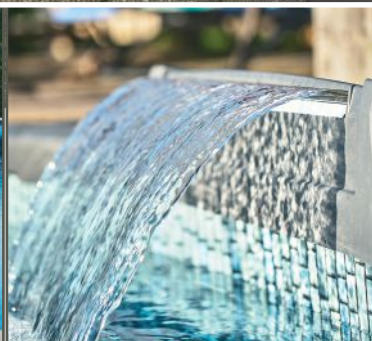
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Building a Common Language

Making the transition from one era to the next sometimes requires a shift in mindset. For this company, that meant getting everybody on the same page.

It definitely is a weird time to be running a pool/spa business. The historical demand brought on by COVID is over, and this fact has affected different companies in different ways.

Some are seeing a reduction in leads for a number of reasons. But for many it's not as bad as some feared. Still, it can be a little disorienting. Will the bubble burst?

For Arvidson Pools and Spas, working through this somewhat uncertain time has involved developing the right mindset for staff and management, as well as finding ways to match the work with the team.

IN THE PRESENT

Trying to figure out when we've completely left the COVID era and are starting the New Normal can be tough. So Dennis Marunde is focused on putting one foot in front of the other, rather than fixating too much on figuring out the context right now.

"It still is a weird time, but I'm trying not to be too focused on it," says the president of the Crystal Lake, Ill.-based company. "Part of my makeup is to be reflective and try to put things into this big-picture, or historical context. Usually that works for me, but sometimes it's not the best thing. For now, I'm just in this head-down, keep-going, don't-try-to-figure-it-all-out-yet mode."

Of course he's monitoring the company's performance as closely as ever. But he's not so worried about determining now whether things will get back to the way they were, or if they're as normal as they'll get. He's staying in the present instead of trying to figure out context for now.

"I'm just thinking, 'Okay I've got to keep my perspective,' which in a lot of ways is just keep doing what we do well, don't worry too much, know that things may never go back to exactly where they were. We're all about adapting."

BACK ON TRACK

In addition to the extraordinary circumstances that have affected everybody the past couple years, Arvidson had to work without Marunde for several months.

At about the time the pandemic started, coincidentally, he stepped out of the day-to-day operations to serve as interim CEO for an educational institution during a transition.

His staff did a great job managing all the bumps in the road. When he returned, though, Marunde realized that the team had become a little siloed. As staffers had to quickly make decisions and solve problems to keep up with the extraordinary workload, they sometimes didn't check in with each other like they normally would.

"We had made exceptions to our normal mode of operating, which was the right thing to do at the time," Marunde says. "But now those changes were starting to

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“We’ve identified things like what is a perfect delivery, a perfect water test, a perfect service call, a perfect new pool-owner orientation? So we’re targeting what the perfect experience is.”

look kind of roguish in pockets.”

He needed the team back on the same page.

The staff spent six Tuesdays in a row in an all-company retreat to discuss these issues and delineate acceptable procedures, practices and goals, as well as everybody’s place in the team. They also looked at ways to improve.

“We’ve identified things like what is a perfect delivery, a perfect water test, a perfect service call, a perfect new pool-owner orientation?” Marunde says. “So we’re targeting what a perfect experience is.”

And to make sure staffers communicate clearly and thoroughly with each other and with customers, everybody is being switched over to one CRM system.

NARROWED FOCUS

The company also instituted a new change to make the construction workload more manageable. It pinpointed the price range of pool that it looks to build. While the company still works in the high end, it is not seeking work in the ultra high end.

“Those high-end projects are great for your image, but our experience is that ... for every \$400,000 or \$500,000 pool that you build, those folks want you available 24/7,” Marunde says. “It puts a significant strain on our service division to be able to accommodate all their needs.”

For their operation, they’ve found that contracts of approximately \$200,000 prove most profitable and the best fit.



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A Warranty Change-Up In Response to the Times

For this firm, a new approach helps offset the post-COVID slowdown and enhance customer relationships.

Dan Lenz could see early on that the COVID bubble was beginning to slowly deflate. So he made some changes that have helped keep the company on track with the last few years.

“I’m very optimistic for this year, as compared to where I was six or seven months ago,” says the co-owner of All Seasons Pools, Spas and Outdoor Living in Orland Park, Ill.

One such change — taking more renovation work than before — has kept construction revenue even for the firm, which traditionally builds approximately 30 to 40 new pools annually.

But All Seasons also started a new policy that has helped boost equipment sales, compete against online sellers, and maintain a lengthy relationship with customers.

The team made sure to set realistic goals. “From 2020 through 2022 ... Those numbers were not normal,” Lenz says. “So if we could keep that 2019/2020 level, I was telling myself I’d be happy with that. Well, we’re well past that.”

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

When 2022 came around, Lenz noticed a difference in market dynamics when it comes to equipment.

During the worst of the supply-chain struggles, pool and spa equipment rarely appeared on e-commerce sites, because it was in such short supply. But once manufacturers ramped production back up, the competitive pressure from online retailers returned. Consumers were back to purchasing equipment on the web, even knowing they could enjoy the security of a superior warranty when working through a pool/spa professional, Lenz found.

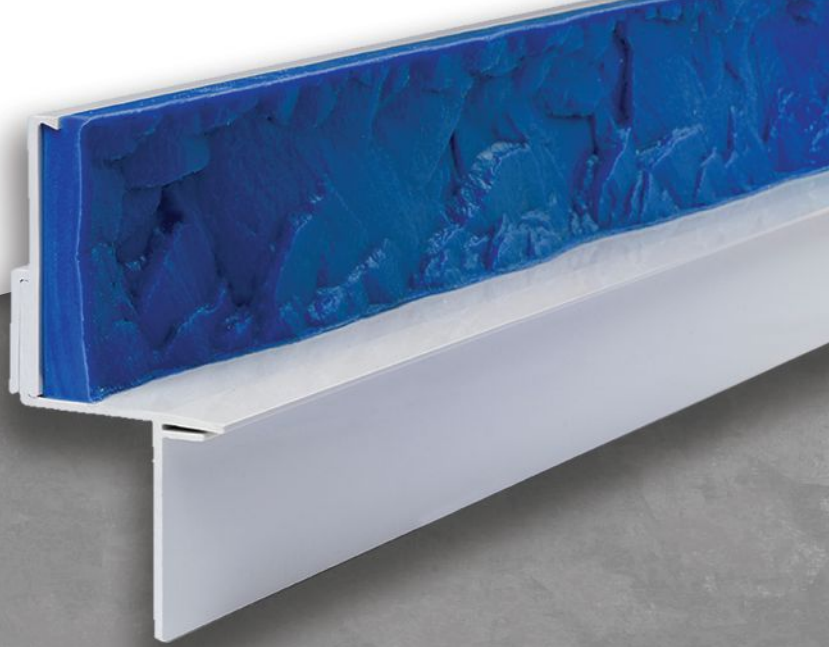
In addition to withstanding this competition, Lenz wanted to extend the relationships his company typically maintained with its customers: Once the manufacturer warranty expires, some clients are apt to seek the lowest bidder for repairs, rather than sticking with the installer. Lenz wanted to incentivize customers to stay with All Seasons.

Extending the equipment warranties might accomplish all these goals, Lenz thought. So he did some data crunching to see if it could work.

He looked at equipment sales between 2017 and 2022, and analyzed the number of repairs the company did for each product. He was looking for service performed both during the warranty



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“If we keep our foot in the back door ... the homeowner is going to call us first. We’re the first in the backyard to find that pump that needs to be replaced, or the filter that has a problem that needs repair.”

period and two years after. He took the costs of pump repairs performed during that period, and divided it by the number of units that had been sold. He did the same thing with filters and heaters. This would represent All Seasons’ cost per unit of equipment to extend the warranty.

BACKED BY DATA

When he saw how low those numbers were, he had the confidence to move forward. Now, equipment purchased from and installed by the company is covered for two years past the manufacturer warranty, fulfilled by All Seasons at no extra cost to the customer.

Examining the data, Lenz found it extremely affordable. “I was absolutely amazed that it was less than 1% of the cost of the unit prior to adding the warranty,” he says.

During the extended warranty period, clients do pay for a diagnostic evaluation, but then the repair is free.

“So we’re getting a little bit of offset in terms of revenue,” he says.

And Lenz likes how this move positions his company. “If we keep our foot in the back door ... the homeowner is going to call us first,” he says. “We’re the first in the backyard to find that pump that needs to be replaced, or the filter that has a problem that needs [repair].”

The results were already apparent in the second quarter of 2023. “Our equipment sales are up 40% over last year,” he says. “Our overall revenue is basically equal to last year, and our profit is ahead of last year.”

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A New Business Model and Succession Planning Post-COVID

Times don't stop changing, so companies can't stop adjusting.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resided top-of-mind for industry professionals over the first few years of this decade. Before that, many companies were beginning to explore their succession plans.

For Goodall Pools of Camp Hill, Pa., both issues struck at approximately the same time. The vinyl-liner/fiberglass pool builder was ready to move to its next generation, with Rob Goodall now holding majority ownership. It would require a new set of skills for him to transition from construction management to company ownership.

Then COVID hit. After the shutdown scares, companies had to adjust or die when demand outpaced capacity, with scarcity and price increases becoming an everyday fact of life. In the last year, company owners have watched those leads slow down.

Rob Goodall wanted to position his company to both grow and respond more readily to market conditions as it entered a new ownership era. To do this, he hired outside consultants and analysts to point out opportunities and weaknesses. In doing so, he and his management team landed on a new business model.

THOROUGH ASSESSMENT

The analytics firm reviewed the financials and organizational structure, and interviewed all employees before providing suggestions.

More recently, Goodall enlisted the help of a leadership development company to develop a long-term business plan, then form an in-house leadership group to keep the company on course. Upper management and some junior managers meet for high-level strategizing, as well as more granular tasks such as developing events to make sure the staff feels valued.

Of all the changes Goodall Pools made at the suggestion of these consultants, one of the most important was analyzing and changing its pricing practices.

"Now we have a whole different analytical way of looking at it," Goodall says. "We're more prepared now than we ever have been with price changes, because we're better calculating for overhead and labor burdens."

As Goodall transitioned into company ownership, he would have to focus on higher-level strategizing and tasks. To free him from some of his day-to-day duties, he created some new supervisory positions. The company promoted from within, charging the new supervisors and managers with some of Goodall's previous tasks.

Delegating isn't easy for everyone. To help, Goodall read "Extreme Ownership" by Jock Willink and Leif Babin. The book discusses decentralized command, a military term meaning to give space for staffers to do their jobs.

"That's really helped me to just guide them along and

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To help with delegating, Goodall read “Extreme Ownership,” which discusses the importance of giving space for staffers to do their jobs. “If they fail or fall, talk to them about it, help build them up and help them grow.”

let them run their plan,” Goodall says. “If they fail or fall, talk to them about it, help build them up and help them grow.”

He largely credits this with the success that the company’s seen so far from its changes.

SHIFTING GEARS

The company’s new methodical approach helped the team realize something else — that the high-end market best served the builder.

“We saw where some things weren’t really beneficial for us with the way we’re structured, the crews that we carry, and our overhead,” Goodall says. “The larger, more in-depth projects seemed to be more fitting, and it narrowed down our clientele list to a more manageable group.”

In transforming to an exclusively high-end builder, Goodall Pools enhanced the standard package it offers, increasing the number and sophistication of features. A premium package included even more elements, such as beautiful paver decking, enhanced lighting or waterfeatures.

To thrive in this market, builders must achieve a certain level of customer service and quality. So the builder made more staff changes. The vice president of construction position took on a more high-level job description, overseeing the department’s financial picture and leaving sales management to a new sales director. Three customer-care representatives were added to communicate more closely with customers.



Leaders in rotomolded spa

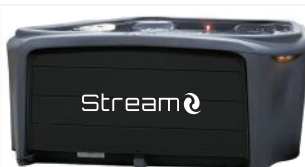
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Facing Staff Shortages and Web Competition

It's a constant battle against these issues, no matter the economy. Learn how this *PSN* Top 50 service company/retailer is responding.

Whether the economy is working in the industry's favor or presenting headwinds, two prevailing and seemingly evergreen issues continue to challenge it: staff shortages and competition created by the internet and big-box stores.

"I think the market size has been increasing but, unfortunately, our business is unable to capitalize on it because of labor shortages," says Tracy Bond, owner/CEO of Great Valley Pool Service, a *PSN* Top 50 service and retail firm in Frazer, Pa. "We actually turn away customers because we don't have enough manpower. I could easily double the size of the business if I had 10 techs walk in here who could do pool work."

To deal with these challenges, Bond and her team have placed special focus on finding ways to streamline employees' jobs, show existing staff that they're appreciated, and honor customers' time.

TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS

For Great Valley, accomplishing these goals has often meant incorporating technology, whether to streamline workload or better service customers.

As an example, the company created an e-commerce site for the customers in its service area. Through this site, all orders are input by customers online, rather than being placed over the phone. This eliminates the need for a staffer to manually type it in.

"It's all been automated to allow us to handle a high volume of customers and service them more efficiently," Bond says.

Some of these technological additions help the company provide that extra level of service that customers won't receive from their big-box store or favorite websites. For instance, Great Valley recently adopted a platform that enables it to communicate back and forth with customers via text.

"Customers can text us and get a response right away," Bond says. "It's also great for us because the whole conversation is documented, so there's a lot less conflict."

This move toward technology also meant that Great Valley kept some of the measures it had taken — temporarily, it originally thought — to get through the COVID lockdowns. For instance, it has continued with a system through which customers can make appointments for their water tests.

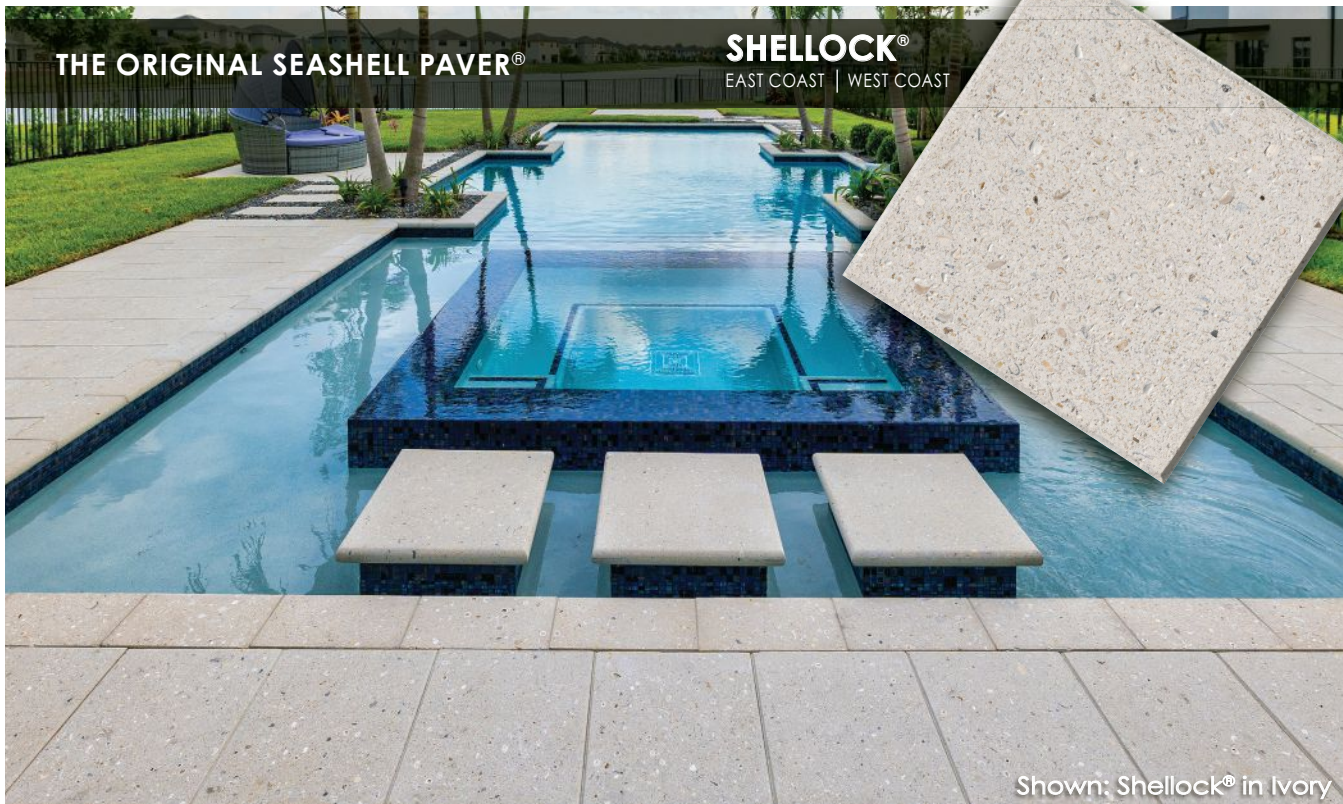
"People's time is valuable," Bond explains. "This way they don't have to wait in lines."

Then the company has promoted these services, as well as new products and events, on an electronic bulletin board displayed in the store on a television monitor to keep customers informed.

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With the pool industry being seasonal in the Northeast, it's especially important to incentivize new employees to stay or — in the case of seasonal help — to return.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

With the pool industry being so seasonal in the Northeast, it's become especially important to incentivize new employees to stay or — in the case of seasonal help — to return. The COVID lockdowns lead to seasonal employees looking elsewhere, throwing off the company's hiring cycles.

For this reason, Great Valley's management instituted a new bonus system for first-year employees, hoping to motivate them to return for a second year. A bonus system had already been in place for staffers who'd been with the company a year or more.

"[First-year employees] work as hard as our one-year staff," Bond says. "So we created this unique program so they could reap the benefits at the end of the season like everybody else."

Through this program, new employees start with a "pot" containing a certain dollar amount for every hour they work. Their performance determines how much of that pot they will receive — call-outs might result in a subtraction from the total, while they might see an addition to the pot after receiving positive comments from customers.

It seems the measure has helped. "This year will be the first time we have returning new help coming in," Bond says. "So we hope we're in a period of growth as far as the labor force goes."

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Converting Luck and Sweat into Aggressive Growth

When faced with today's economic realities and a once-in-a-lifetime staffing opportunity, this service executive forged a path to a new chapter.

In any list of requirements for operating a successful business — and keeping it that way — adaptability will place toward the top. The last couple years have demonstrated this for *PSN* Top 50 Service firm Payan Pool Service.

When Javier Payan, president/CEO of the San Diego-based company, foresaw a shift in the competitive environment due to the post-pandemic slowdown, he made a significant change to his business model. The opportunity arose to hire a high-level industry executive, so he jumped at the chance, using the key hire as a springboard for cultivating the growth he'd been wanting. Along the way, he kept chipping away at the goal of fully staffing his company, not only with enough employees to manage the current workload, but to accommodate more.

The adjustments, Payan says, have resulted in noticeable revenue increases over last year, the needed infrastructure for growth, and a solidified company culture.

STAFFING OPPORTUNITY

Payan had long hoped to grow his company but, due to understaffing, it was slow going.

"The limitations we had in growth were getting people, having capacity, and having an infrastructure that could support more people, trucks and customers," he says. "Part of that infrastructure was having management."

An opportunity to begin closing this gap presented itself when a former executive of organizations such as United Aqua Group and Fluidra expressed an interest in working with Payan.

"It was just a stroke of luck," Payan says. "I knew that it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Scott Ferguson became the new director of growth and development. Not only did he take over key initiatives such as finding the ideal software, but he immediately had an impact on company culture and, along with other recent key hires, fostered an emphasis on the company's values.

Finally, after a couple years trying to build a full staff, the firm has finally done so, thanks to a combination of referral bonuses to employees, along with hiring websites and a service called Rapid Hire Pro, which posts the job openings on the web and performs preliminary interviews. These hires have included new department managers who have taken over much of the day-to-day operations, so Payan can focus on big-picture issues.

FOCUS ON CORE BUSINESS

As a pool-service veteran of more than 35 years, Payan could see it coming: Pool/spa construction was slowing down, so that would bring more competition and

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lowballing on price for his renovations operation.

With new construction on a downward curve, pool builders are devoting more time to renovations, creating more competition in that segment. If things go as they did during the last economic downturn, builders also will pursue more service work. Of course, with the increased supply will come decreased prices.

"We've seen this song and dance before," Payan says. "It's like this whole domino train."

To deal with the expected change, and because he'd found renovations to be the most difficult part of his business, Payan decided to stop doing them and focus on his core business — service.

"This year the theme is, 'Let's just do what we're really good at,'" he says. "We'll take the best possible care of our customers, so when someone [boasts a lower price], the customer will say, 'I'm not switching — you guys are always there for me.'"

This also fits into his growth plans, since regular, recurring service yields the most profit for the firm. And Payan's reconfigured staff is helping maximize that profitability. Now, his service manager can actively promote the company's premium plan. This contract includes less-regular

services, such as filter cleanings and replacement of wear-and-tear items such as the pump basket, pressure gauges and O-rings.

"If you're signed up as a premium-plan customer, you're not going to get any other bills, except a repair that you request," Payan says.

Though the company added this option a couple years ago, the staff was too busy to promote it. Now, most new customers are signing up for this plan.

POSITIVE RESULTS

All these changes seem to be working: Business is up 15% so far compared with the same time last year.

These opportunities had been there for some time, but the company is now positioned to accommodate it. "In the last couple years, we've had to turn away four to five new service customers per day," Payan says. "Now we have four or five new service agreements going out every day."

And Payan can focus on steering the company's growth and making big-picture changes.

"We've been kind of flying by the seat of our pants for the last 30-something years," he says. "To get to that next step, you have to do things differently."

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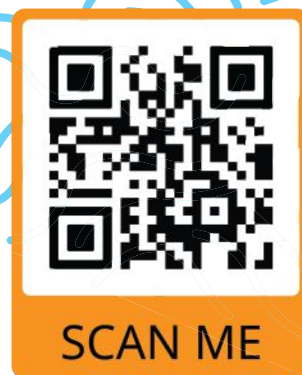
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Boosting Relationship Building Methods to Reach a New Market

As part of a plan to serve the ultra high end, Regal Pools combined the modern with traditional to get back to personalized service post-pandemic.

Regal Pools has long worked in the high end. By the pandemic's conclusion, it had been veering toward the ultra-high-end market for some time. As it became clear that pool sales across the industry would be slowing, Managing Partners Josh Buzzell and Edwin Escobar decided to more actively pursue projects of \$200,000 and more in their Houston, Texas-area market.

"Those types of clients don't struggle in economic times," Buzzell says. "A lot of times they don't go to a bank for financing, and if they do, they're borrowing against their own money."

Key to working with this clientele, Buzzell believed, was establishing and maintaining a personal connection. This would help Regal gain the customer referrals needed in this market.

Additionally, the company was dealing with a relatively new sales team. Buzzell and Escobar needed to position the new sales associates to provide the service and, more importantly, the connection appropriate to this echelon of clientele.

BACK TO BASICS

To accomplish these goals, the company got back to basics, setting aside some of the automated or less personal communication strategies that had helped manage the historic demand in 2020 and 2021, moving in favor of those that seem more immediate and personal.

"I'm really getting away from emails," Buzzell says. "They're great in certain situations but, in sales, they're very stale, and they don't 'taste' as good as a text message, a call, a FaceTime and really getting to know the client."

But we're still living in the 21st century, so the team has focused on a platform that fits some of its goals: the social media site Instagram. This would help create a personal connection with potential customers in the demographic it sought.

A Regal staffer posts twice daily onto Instagram as one of their duties, while salespeople and project managers help with the content.

Also among the goals in using Instagram: Familiarizing followers with the company's new sales associates. They video record themselves by way of introduction to share a little bit about themselves or a recent job. To show off the company's work, project managers now video each project with a smartphone issued by the company. This replaces the set of still photos they used to

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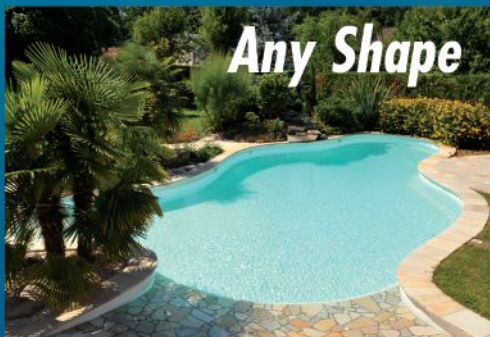


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take for documentation. The staffer who manages social media then edits and posts the videos to the company's page.

They set clear goals in posting to the site. "When we do a video on Instagram, it's to either introduce you to ourselves, show you a project, or teach you something that you don't know," Buzzell explains.

If you're going to try this, Buzzell recommends posting consistently above all else. "Instagram is like a race car," he says. "You have to keep putting the jet fuel in it if you want to keep it going."

And don't overthink the videos. With today's higher-end smart phones, it's easier to produce quality recordings. The goal is to create a personal connection, which is fully within reach. "Nobody thinks you're a Hollywood director," Buzzell adds.

He has begun using this capability for the company's email newsletters, for which Buzzell videotapes himself addressing customers for a more personal touch.

THE LONG GAME

Regal wanted to maintain customer relationships even after the pool is built, hoping to keep the company top-

of-mind for referrals.

Once a pool is sold, the company now employs a months-long routine to show its appreciation. It begins right when the pool is finished. Escobar visits the customer to check if there's anything else the company can do, or that the customer needs.

Three months later, the designers send a hand-written letter expressing their appreciation and encouraging the customer to reach out if they need anything. "Sometimes we'll have their kids write on it: 'Hey, thanks for trusting my dad to build your swimming pool,'" Buzzell says.

After six months, the customer receives a substantial gift card for a popular, local steak house. And at the year anniversary, the company sends a personalized bottle of champagne or wine for the customer to display.

"It's a conversation piece in their house, and I'm in their house forever," Buzzell says.

He hopes the relatively new program will help customers remember why they hired Regal Pools.

"You're recaptivating and initiating more sales," he says. "... If I sell 100 pools and get 100 referrals, that starts to really change our business and allows us to scale even further."

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2023 POOL | SPA | PATIO/DECK EXPO GUIDE

Here, the essential guide for every attendee to make the most of their time in Las Vegas — a show floor map, exhibitors list and complete education schedule.

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Exhibitor List

3D Cloud by Marxent	4325	Biolab, Inc/ NC Brands	8349	doForms	3941	Guangzhou Monalisa Bath Ware Co.,Ltd	6158
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Exhibitor List

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2023 INT'L POOL SPA PATIO/DECK EXPO CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 13 - 15 2023 | LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER

Monday, November 13			Speaker(s)	Track	Room/Location
ASA2	8:00am - 6:30pm	Quality Shotcrete - Know It When You See It Presented by the American Shotcrete Association (with exam)	Charles Hanskat	Builder	W202
ASA3	8:00am - 4:00pm	Quality Shotcrete - Know It When You See It Presented by the American Shotcrete Association (without exam)	Charles Hanskat	Builder	W202
M01	8:00am - 9:00am	Leadership - Traits and Practices of Highly Effective Leaders	Tyler Rasmussen, Justin Gormley	Leadership and Career Development	W204
M02	8:00am - 9:00am	GENESIS D327: The Good, The Bad, The Ugly - How Buildings, Pools and The Landscape Successfully Live Together	Paul John Boulifard	Design/Outdoor Living	W213
M03	8:00am - 9:00am	GENESIS C420: Advanced Floating Techniques for Tile Installation	Greg Andrews, Ken Milberry	Builder	W214
M04	8:00am - 9:00am	Builder Power Panel	Brett Abbott (Moderator), Charlie Claffey, Mike Church, Tony Campbell	Builder	W219
M05	8:00am - 9:00am	Leak Detection & Non Destructive Pipe Repair Methods	Darren Merlob	Service, Technology Innovation	W223
M06	8:00am - 9:00am	Disrupting or Prompting: Does This Affect How You Approach Business?	Tom Shay	Retail	W225
M07	8:00am - 9:00am	WU D3634: Designing Decks and Pergolas for Stunning Pools	Kurt Kraisinger	Design/Outdoor Living	W311
M08	8:00am - 9:00am	WU B1122: Hazardous Materials & Proper Handling for Pool Pros	Lauren Broom	Business	W313
M09	8:00am - 9:00am	10 Tips For Financial Success in Your Pool Business	Nick Day, Matthew Gohlke	Business, Leadership and Career Development	W316
PN05	8:30am - 10:15pm	Pool Nation Boot Camp C101: Water Chemistry 101	Terry Arko	Service	W212
KEY	9:15am - 10:15am	Keynote	Anthony Robles	Business	W326
PN06	10:30am - 11:30am	Pool Nation Boot Camp SH201: Managing Salt Pools	David Jones	Service	W212
WC01	10:30am - 11:30am	WAHC: Interim CDC Guidance for Surf Venues	Michele Hlavsa, RN, MPH	Water Quality and Air Quality	W231

**2023 INT'L POOL SPA PATIO/DECK EXPO CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 13 - 15 2023 | LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER**

WC02	10:30am - 11:30am	WAHC: Pool Chemical Safety Discussion Panel: Promoting Safety and Preventing Injuries	Sean Dingman	Pool Management	W232
WC03	10:30am - 11:30am	WAHC: A Whole Community Approach to Drowning Prevention: A Case Study on the Deliverance and Scaling of Water Safety Programming in At-risk Communities	Megan Ferraro	Water Safety Powered by NDPA	W233
G1	11:00am - 12:00pm	GENESIS Solution Center - D123: Trends in Outdoor Designs	Kate Wiseman	Design/Outdoor Living	Booth #6166
N01	11:30am - 12:30pm	DECKx Talk: Maximizing Social Media Impact	Chris Breen, Gordon South, Catherine Lippincott, Sean Collinsgru	Deck Education	W317
CPOL	12:00pm - 1:15pm	PHTA Luncheon: Celebrating 50 Years of CPO		Special Event	W326
G2	12:30pm - 1:30pm	GENESIS Solution Center - C353: Splash Pad Construction	Terry Brannon, P.E.	Builder	Booth #6166
PN07	12:30pm - 1:00pm	Pool Nation Boot Camp OZA101: Pool Nation Boot Camp: Ozone Systems: A Comprehensive Course for Pool Professionals	Steve Barnes	Service	W212
M10	1:00pm - 2:00pm	PHTA Adopting ANSI/PHTA/ICC-2 Standard as a Companion to the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code	Dennis Berkshire	Builder	W213
M11	1:00pm - 2:00pm	GENESIS B215: Thinking Outside the Box - An Industrywide Discussion Panel on How to Run your Business	Rocky Wisely, Joan Roca, Issac Keselman	Business	W214
M12	1:00pm - 2:00pm	WU C1698: Clear Direction: Designing and Installing Acrylic Pool Windows	Rick Chafey	Builder	W311
PN08	1:00pm - 2:30pm	Pool Nation Boot Camp WCB201: Next-Level Water Chemistry for Pool Professionals	Alicia Stephens	Service	W212
N02	1:30pm - 2:30pm	DECKx Talk: Sealing the Deal: Leveraging Design to Boost Sales	Chris Breen, John Lea, Robert Hodichak	Deck Education	W317
WC04	1:30pm - 2:30pm	WAHC: Water Quality Ranges, Target Values, or Balance Indexes: What is the Best Way to Maintain Pool Water	Jody O'Grady, John Weber, Joe Laurino, Ph.D	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Advanced Recreational Water Chemistry, Pool Management	W231
WC05	1:30pm - 2:30pm	WAHC: Overcoming Tragedy - The Bakari Williams Protocol	Michael Debrecht, Courtnei Anderson	Advanced Recreational Water Chemistry	W232
WC06	1:30pm - 2:30pm	WAHC: An Update on the Latest Drowning Data and What We Can Learn From It	Julie Gilchrist, Adam Katchmarchi	Water Safety Powered by NDPA	W233
G3	2:00pm - 3:00pm	GENESIS Solution Center - B210: Unveiling the Scientific Power of Water and How it Can Shape your Client Proposals	Joel-Eric Mignault	Builder, Service	Booth #6166
E4	2:30pm - 3:30pm	Enhance the Swimmer's Experience: Learn about AIS Water's Simpler, Safer, Smarter Pool Water Disinfection	Elena Gosse	Service	
WP2	2:30pm - 3:30pm	Hot Tub Power Women Meet & Greet	Megan Kendrick, Leslie Cunningham	Business, Leadership and Career Development	Booth #3337
PN09	2:45pm - 3:15pm	Pool Nation Boot Camp EP101: Specialty Water Care - Enzymes & Phosphates	Jamie Novak	Service	W212
WC07	2:45pm - 3:45pm	WAHC: Aquatic Operations: How to Do More with Less	Tom Schaefer	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Advanced Recreational Water Chemistry, Pool Management	W231

**2023 INT'L POOL SPA PATIO/DECK EXPO CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 13 - 15 2023 | LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER**

WC08	2:45pm - 3:45pm	WAHC: Doing Good is Good for Business: 10 Unexpected Benefits of Joining the World's Largest Swimming Lesson	Beth Root	Pool Management	W232
WC09	2:45pm - 3:45pm	WAHC: Creating a Comprehensive Safety Plan: Mitigating Risks and Ensuring Safety	Johnathan Nies	Pool Management	W233
N03	3:00pm - 4:00pm	DECKx Talk: Boost Your Bottom Line: Tech-Driven Estimations & Project Management	Chris Breen, Eric Fortenberry, Jeff Wraley	Deck Education	W317
G4	3:30pm - 4:30pm	GENESIS Solution Center - C271: Project Profiles - An Interactive Discussion on Design and Construction	Andy Kaner	Design/Outdoor Living	Booth #6166
D02	4:00pm - 5:00pm	Decking Power Panel	Chuck Casey (Moderator), Brendan Casey, John Lea, Mike Mitchell, Andy Hanley, Clint Webb	Business, Deck Education	Booth #4729
WAVE	5:00pm - 6:00pm	PHTA WAVE Reception		Special Event	
WP	6:00pm - 8:00pm	Welcome Party	Chris Breen	Special Event	Ayu Pool Lounge, Resorts World
Tuesday, November 14			Speaker(s)	Track	Room/Location
TU01	8:00am - 9:00am	The First Appointment for Backyard Transformation	Mike Farley	Builder, Deck Education, Design/Outdoor Living	W204
TU02	8:00am - 9:00am	GENESIS C110: Pool Construction Documents - What Needs to be on Your Plans	Skip Phillips, Terry Brannon, P.E.	Business	W213
TU03	8:00am - 9:00am	GENESIS C412: Demystifying Waterproofing	Greg Andrews, Ken Milberry	Builder	W214
TU04	8:00am - 9:00am	Transforming Pools with AI and Advanced Technology: The Future of Construction, Safety, and Maintenance	Sai Reddy	Technology Innovation	W313
TU05	8:00am - 9:00am	Maximizing Efficiency: The Role of Specialty Chemicals in Pool Care	Alicia Stephens	Service	W223
TU06	8:00am - 9:00am	Customer Relations in an Everchanging World	Jane Merritt, Mallory Bjekich	Retail	W225
TU07	8:00am - 9:00am	How to Build Your Team	Edgar Sanchez, Katie Wilke Junkers	Builder, Business, Leadership and Career Development	W316
TU08	8:00am - 9:00am	WU C1641: Porcelain Pool Tile Installation: Techniques and Best Practices	Jimmy Reed	Builder	W311
TU09	9:15am - 10:15am	GENESIS E115: Introduction to Circulation & Hydraulics	Terry Brannon, P.E.	Builder	W213
TU10	9:15am - 10:15am	GENESIS D326: Innovation not Reinvention - Learn How to Implement Creativity and Innovation to Transform your Business	Feras Irikat	Business	W214
TU11	9:15am - 10:15am	Retail Power Panel	Matthew Gohlke (Moderator), Mallory Bjekich, Travis Hogan, Ted Lawrence	Retail	W219
TU12	9:15am - 10:15am	Saltwater Chemistry: It's More than Just Salt	Alicia Stephens	Service	W223
TU13	9:15am - 10:15am	Everything But the Deck	Glenn Mathewson	Deck Education	
TU13	9:15am - 10:15am	Turn Your Team Into A Championship Team: Hiring, Training, Management, Motivation and Retention	David Fellman	Business, Leadership and Career Development	W204
TU14	9:15am - 10:15am	WU D1562: Igniting Imagination: Designing with Fire and Water for Stunning Outdoor Spaces	Jason Brownlee	Design/Outdoor Living	W311
TU15	9:15am - 10:15am	Ready to Retire? Exploring Transition Options	Edgar Sanchez	Business	W316

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TU16	9:15am - 10:15am	2027 ICC Code Hearings - NADRA Leads the Way in Reviewing and Suggesting New Proposals	Mark Guthrie, John Kozal, PE	Deck Education	W225
WC10	9:15am - 10:15am	WAHC: ANSI/PHTA Standards Guiding You to Better Water Chemistry	Jody O'Grady, Jim Egan, John Weber, Joe Laurino, Ph.D	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Advanced Recreational Water Chemistry, Pool Management	W231
WC11	9:15am - 10:15am	WAHC: Survey of Float Tank Operating Practices	Roy Vore	Pool Management	W232
WC12	9:15am - 10:15am	WAHC: Operationalizing Water Safety Resources and Tools into Your Business	Adam Katchmarchi, Alison Petri	Water Safety Powered by NDPA	W233
WC13	10:30am - 11:30am	WAHC: Adopting ANSI/PHTA/ICC-2 Standard as a Companion to the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code	Dennis Berkshire, Jason Mason	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Advanced Recreational Water Chemistry, Pool Management	W231
WC14	10:30am - 11:30am	WAHC: The Explosion of Splash Pads in Our Community: Let's Talk About Them	Scott Bowron	Pool Management	W232
WC15	10:30am - 11:30am	WAHC: Technological Advances to Drowning Prevention in an Era of Lifeguard Shortages	Larry Newell	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Pool Management	W233
G5	11:00am - 12:00pm	GENESIS Solution Center - D220: Diseño de piscinas: Cumpliendo las grandes expectativas de su cliente (NUEVO: CURSO EN ESPANOL)	Joan Roca	Builder, Design/Outdoor Living	Booth #6166
N04	11:30am - 12:30pm	DECKx Talk: Mastering Marketing & Branding for Outdoor Living	Amy Breen, April Edwards	Deck Education	W317
G6	12:30pm - 1:30pm	GENESIS Solution Center - D235: The Impact of Color on Your Brand	Feras Irikat	Business	Booth #6166
TU17	1:00pm - 2:00pm	GENESIS D310: Out of This World - Innovative Pool & Backyard Designs	John Kenyon	Design/Outdoor Living	W213
TU18	1:00pm - 2:00pm	Water Quality Ranges, Target Values, or Balance Indexes: What is The Best Way to Maintain Pool Water	Jody O'Grady, John Weber, Joe Laurino, Ph.D	Service	W214
TU19	1:00pm - 2:00pm	WU C1711: Pool Renovation Inspection Checklist: Considerations for a Successful Project	Paolo Benedetti	Builder	W311
WC16	1:00pm - 2:00pm	WAHC: The NY State Pool Disinfection Efficacy Study	Roy Vore, Tom Kuechler, Jenn Huang	Advanced Recreational Water Chemistry	W231
WC17	1:00pm - 2:00pm	WAHC: Beyond the Code: Taking Operational Standards to the Next Level	Kirsten Barnes, Miklos Valdez	Pool Management	W232
WC18	1:00pm - 2:00pm	WAHC: Exposing the Significance of Drowning of People with Autism	Stacy Hoaglund	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Pool Management	W233
E8	1:30pm - 2:30pm	Million Dollar Pool Design Challenge	Mike Farley	Special Event	Booth #3555
N05	1:30pm - 2:30pm	DECKx Talk: From Chaos to Clarity: Mastering the Model of Scaling Your Business	Chris Breen, Amy Breen, Jason Varney, Leif Wirtanen	Deck Education	W317
G7	2:00pm - 3:00pm	GENESIS Solution Center - C240: Waterproofing: Compatibility is Critical	Ken Milberry	Service	Booth #6166
N06	3:00pm - 4:00pm	DECKx Talk: Beyond Wood: The Next Generation of Deck Framing	Chris Breen, James Gunning, Scott Sheffield, Jason Alloway	Deck Education	W317
G8	3:30pm - 4:30pm	GENESIS Solution Center - C310: Interview with a Master CBP	John Kenyon, Brian Van Bower	Business	Booth #6166
GANN	6:00pm - 10:00pm	GENESIS 25th Anniversary Celebration		Special Event	TBD
PNA	6:00pm - 10:00pm	Pool Nation Awards		Special Event	W326



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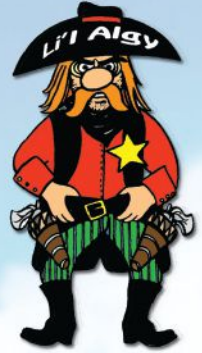
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Wednesday, November 15			Speaker(s)	Track	Room/ Location
WE01	8:00am - 9:00am	Backyard Pool Chemistry For Service Pros	Eric Knight	Service	W204
WE02	8:00am - 9:00am	GENESIS C315: Remodel Do's and Dont's: How to Elevate the Old to Gold	Terry Brannon, P.E., Kate Wiseman	Design/Outdoor Living	W213
WE03	8:00am - 9:00am	GENESIS B110: Protecting Your Business - 6 Basic Steps to Prevent Litigation or other Legal Issues	Steven Getzoff, Skip Phillips	Business	W214
WE04	8:00am - 9:00am	The 4 Keys to Improve Your Sales Team's Win Rates	Derek Baer	Business, Leadership and Career Development	W313
WE05	8:00am - 9:00am	Enhancing the Power of Mobile Apps in Pool Building	Julio Schembari	Technology Innovation	W233
WE06	8:00am - 9:00am	Finding Leaks - Turn Headaches into Profits	Brad Madison, Christine Pearson	Service	W225
WE07	8:00am - 9:00am	WU C1233: Concrete Science: Optimal Mix Designs and Delivery Logistics	Bill Drakeley	Builder	W311
WE08	8:00am - 9:00am	Family Friendly Landscape Designs	Scott Cohen	Builder, Design/Outdoor Living	W316
WC19	9:00am - 10:00am	WAHC: Guidance for Artificial Swimming Lagoons	Joe Laco, RS/REHS, MSEH, Michele Hlavsa, RN, MPH, Dewey Case	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Pool Management	W231
WC20	9:00am - 10:00am	WAHC: The Future of Technology and AI for Complete Pool Management	Sai Reddy	Water Safety Powered by NDPA, Pool Management	W232
WC21	9:00am - 10:15am	WAHC: Safety Surfacing on Splash Pads: Standards and Best Practices for Water Safety	Brian Howell	Water Safety Powered by NDPA	W233
WE09	9:15am - 10:15am	7 Crucial Marketing Secrets Every Pool Builder Should Know	Brett Abbott	Business	W204
WE10	9:15am - 10:15am	GENESIS D340: The Roots of Modern Design - From "Then" Until "Now"	Paul John Boulifard	Design/Outdoor Living	W213
WE11	9:15am - 10:15am	ANSI/PHTA Standards Guiding You to Better Water Chemistry	Jody O'Grady, Jim Egan, John Weber	Service	W214
WE12	9:15am - 10:15am	Service Power Panel	Steve Barnes, Javier Payan, Edgar De Jesus	Service	W219
WE13	9:15am - 10:15am	Evaluate Your Store 360 Degrees: Deliver an Astonishing Experience at Every Touchpoint	Anne Obarski	Retail, Service	W223
WE14	9:15am - 10:15am	Pool Business Management: Accounts Payable, Cash Flow, Draw Management OH MY!	Heather Linton	Business	W225
WE15	9:15am - 10:15am	WU E1221: Structural Details of Pool Shells: Principles and Practices	David Peterson	Builder	W311
WE16	9:15am - 10:15am	Fast Friends - Quickly Bond With Your Clients to Discover What They Really Want	Scott Cohen	Business, Leadership and Career Development	W316
WC22	10:15am - 11:15am	WAHC: PHTA Pathogen Reduction Task Force: Technology Assessment and Recommendations	Joe Laurino, Ph.D, Roy Vore, James Amburgey, Ph.D.	Special Event	W231
WC23	10:15am - 11:15am	WAHC: Digital Documentation for Improved Aquatic Risk Management	Kirsten Barnes	Pool Management	W232
WC24	10:15am - 11:15am	WAHC: Unifying Water Safety Efforts Across the United States: A Panel Discussion	Megan Ferraro, Julie Gilchrist, Adam Katchmarchi, Alison Petri	Water Safety Powered by NDPA	W233
G9	11:00am - 12:00pm	GENESIS Solution Center - D410: Understanding Architecture, Why It Matters	Paul John Boulifard	Builder	Booth #6166
G10	12:30pm - 1:30pm	GENESIS Solution Center - B310: Increasing Your Business Through Wellness Integration	Joel-Eric Mignault	Business	Booth #6166

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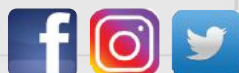
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PSP/Deck Expo Exhibitors Marketplace

Details on products of exhibitors at the 2023 PSP/Deck Expo are based on materials provided by the manufacturers.

BY PSN STAFF



Advantage Mfg. Booth 3822

Product: Pro Pool Performance Package
Features: bundled specifically for pool service and maintenance pros; includes a Port-a-Vac 2.0, a Pool Service Cart 2.0, a Vac Kit and a T-bar hitch and two cart hitches; no-mark wheels are ready to mount onto a truck
Contact: advantageman.com



Aiper Booth 6555

Product: Aiper Seagull Pro Cordless Robotic Pool Cleaner
Features: includes WavePath Navigation Technology, a powerful quad-motor system, and wall-climbing capabilities; run time of 3 hours and quick charge time of 90 minutes; three cleaning modes – floor cleaning, wall cleaning and auto-mode
Contact: aiper.com



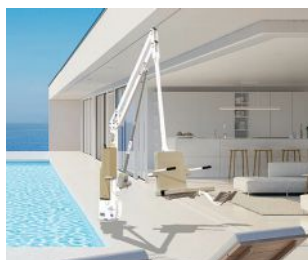
AIS Water Booth 7144

Product: Ecoline Commercial Chlorine Generator
Features: for low-salinity and competition swimming pools; now available in the U.S.; inline chlorine generation via electrolysis from a TDS level as low as 1200ppm; freshwater pool salinity range from 950PPM; reduces the risk of salt-induced degradation
Contact: aiswater.com



Aqua Comb/Mi-Way Booth 8751

Product: Aqua Comb
Features: comes 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; combines 3-inch-wide powerful water sprays with a pick comb that opens the pleats and cleans the side walls
Contact: aquacomb.com



Aqua Creek Products Booth 4552

Product: Revolution XL Deep Draft
Features: more sleek direct drive motor minimizes footprint while increasing versatility; offers big water draft and setback ranges; battery-operated lift is solar compatible; handcrafted with stainless steel components; choice of powder coat colors
Contact: aquacreek.com



Aqua Technics Pools Booth 8352

Product: Graphene Nano-Tech Fiberglass Pools
Features: company has integrated graphene, a strong material, into every pool, resulting in its strongest, lightweight pools with higher resistance; patented technology redefines fiberglass pool construction, per maker
Contact: aquatechnicpools.com



Aquabella Tile Booth 5063

Product: Chateau - New Porcelain Series
Features: new Chateau series evoke playful and stress-free tones of the French countryside
Contact: aquabellatile.com



AquaStar Pool Products Booth 6139

Product: PureStar Corona Discharge Ozone System
Features: compact, all-in-one, in-line corona discharge ozone generator; activated by the pool pump, its self-regulating design minimizes system pressure impact, reducing energy costs; generates up to 1 gram of ozone per hour
Contact: aquastarpoolproducts.com



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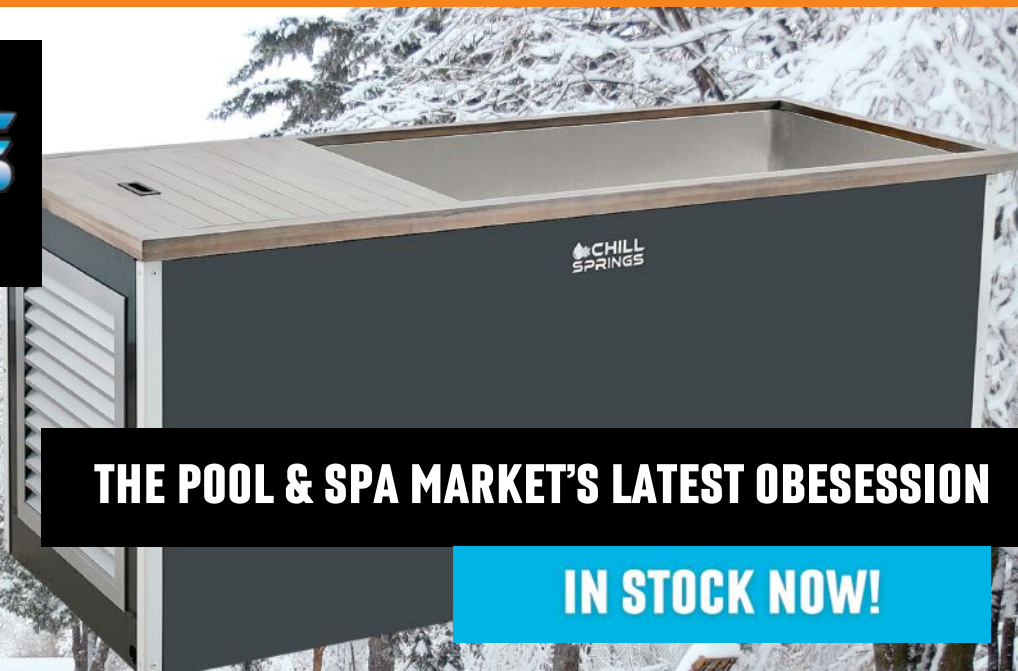
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**B Squared Pools
Booth 5744**

Product: Polypropylene Twin Wall Material

Features: unlike traditional pool materials such as steel, fiberglass, and concrete, polypropylene does not chip, rust, rot, or decay, per maker; used in Europe for 20+ years; provides a durable and reliable pool that's designed to last longer than traditional pools

Contact: bsquaredpools.com



**Blue-White Industries
Booth 7662**

Product: FLEXFLO A1A Acid and Liquid Chlorine Feeder

Features: specially designed for commercial aquatics, resort facilities and waterpark installations with its broad feed range of 0.01 to 100 GPD (15.8 LPH); this broad feed range helps make it possible to standardize on just one pump, one tube, one control system, and one power supply for all chemical feed needs

Contact: blue-white.com



**Bullfrog Spas
Booth 7139**

Product: Swim Series S150

Features: 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; unique splash pad area allows users to practice swimming, play games, or splash around; also features an ample number of multilevel seats

Contact: bullfrogspas.com



**CamerEye
Booth 5968**

Product: CamerEye AI Smart Pool System

Features: smart camera system makes pool construction, inspection compliance, homeowner pool safety, maintenance and automation easier and safer; scalable system expands throughout the pool lifecycle to monitor, detect and notify for what matters the most; dealer opportunities are available

Contact: camereye.ai



**Carvin Pool Equipment
Booth 7355**

Product: StarFall

Features: 22-inch LED backlit waterfall for above-ground pools; easy to install; cascade is adjustable

Contact: carvinpool.com



**CCEI Pool USA
Booth 8360**

Product: TILD Automation System

Features: simple, affordable, entry-level automation system is easy for pool professionals to sell and install; can manage the pool's heater, lights and pump, all from the simple VigiPool app on any smart phone; automates pump room equipment, regardless of the equipment brand or age; UL and ULC certified system

Contact: ccei-pool.com/us



**Chemtrol
Booth 6462**

Product: PC1500 Chemical Controller

Features: ORP, pH, temperature, automatic data logging, remote access (wired or wireless)

Contact: sbcontrol.com



**Clear Comfort
Booth 7136**

Product: CCW100 Dual AOP System

Features: powered by hydroxyl-based AOP, the Dual CCW100 AOP supplemental sanitation system is designed for small commercial pools, spas and splash pads; reduces chemical use, chloramines and related costs, per maker

Contact: clearcomfort.com



ControlOMatic Booth 4030

Product: Improved SmarterSpa+ Chlorine Generator
Features: now has a smaller control box that includes chlorine control built into the cell so it tests and maintains the chlorine in the water; mounts easily to the spa's skirt, then simply add salt and place the electrode into the water; comes with an improved, easy to use mobile app for automation control
Contact: controlomatic.com



Deckorators Booth 4133

Product: Privacy Screen System
Features: introduces definition and seclusion to outdoor spaces; allows users to mix and match various components, such as screens, slats, and decking, to create a unique and personalized style for their backyard; user-friendly installation; caters to the evolving needs and desires of homeowners
Contact: deckorators.com



Elevate Pools Booth 4652

Product: Adjustable Depth Systems, Wake Surf Machines
Features: adjustable depth pools and Wake Surf Machines offer users the option to dive, play, relax and ride the waves – all in the comfort of their own yard
Contact: elevatepools.com



GPM Mfg. Booth 5650

Product: The Shelf Lounger
Features: the Shelf Lounger's all-in-one tanning ledge with lounging chairs and spill over edge provides users with entertainment, relaxation and enjoyment of water; installation allows the poolside user to enjoy a second body of water rather than minimizing pool space
Contact: spillwayspas.com



H2flow Controls Booth 6537

Product: LevelSmart Wireless Autofill
Features: LevelSmart eliminates the chore of filling a pool manually and the risk of over-filling it; with 24-hour-per-day wireless monitoring, LevelSmart automatically maintains the water level of a pool, spa, pond, water feature, or tank
Contact: h2flow.net



Haviland Pool & Spa Booth 4344

Product: Bagged Balancers
Features: now offering select sizes of water corrective and chlorine complimentary chemistries in resealable retail friendly packaging; resealable, bagged balancers use a 'gusseted base' that allows the bag to stand independently on retail store shelves; products are available in both 5lb and 10lb sizes; made in the USA
Contact: havilandpool.com



Heritage Pool Supply Group Booth 7548

Product: Heritage Pool Plus
Features: upgraded website designed for the Heritage customer; allows users to buy local from trusted brands using time-saving features and faster page loads for a quicker and smoother online experience; site is optimized for mobile, giving users the ability to order on the go
Contact: heritagepoolplus.com



HFS Financial Services Booth 6540

Product: Home Improvement Loans
Features: 100% unsecured loans with terms of up to 20 years; loans of up to \$500,000 with no stage funding; direct-to-consumer funding model allows the contractor to treat the customer as a cash buyer
Contact: hfsfin.com



Home Port Water Testing Booth 6236

Product: BufferZone Service Scheduling & Water Test Software

Features: new BufferZone software can schedule and keep track of service jobs, repairs and weekly cleaning routes; water testing can be done in the field by blue tooth connection using the LaMotte Spin Lab to smart phone or tablet

Contact:
homeportcomputer.com

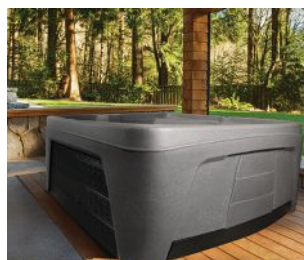


Industrial Test Systems Booth 7663

Product: Pool eXact EZ Photometer Kit

Features: new NSF/ANSI 50 L1 Certified Pool eXact EZ photometer Kit is engineered to deliver 10 important pool water parameters with lab quality results by the poolside

Contact: sensafe.com

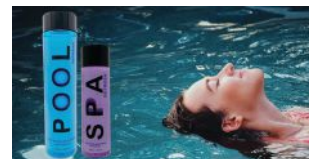


Innovaspa/Pur Spas Booth 6740

Product: Feeling Spa

Features: new Feeling spa offers the Feel It station to experience a pleasant feeling in the hands or feet as they're rubbed over the protrusions; additional features include a back lit, cascading waterfall and hydrotherapy massage provided by 24 adjustable jets; made in Canada

Contact: purspas.com



inSPAration Booth 6155

Product: Pool & Spa Refresh by inSPAration

Features: pH neutral formula ensures compatibility with all sanitization systems; added aroma transforms a pool and spa into a paradise of relaxation; formulated to soften dry skin and reduce chemical odors

Contact: inSPAration.com



Jobe Valves Booth 3927

Product: Top-Up Turtle

Features: Top-Up Turtle is an automatic pool level refill valve; place on the pool edge and connect to a garden hose water supply to refill the pool to designated water level due to evaporation and pool play

Contact: Top-UpTurtle.com



King Technology Booth 6944

Product: FROG @ease Sanitizing System for Swim Spas

Features: designed to kill bacteria two ways; shock only once a month; uses up to 75% less chlorine compared to the minimum ANSI recommended chlorine level of 2.0 ppm for a swim spa; self-regulates with continuous 0.5 - 1.0 ppm chlorine level at all times; creates fresh mineral water, per maker

Contact: frogproducts.com



LaMotte Co. Booth 8163

Product: WaterLink SpinTouch Lab

Features: photometer measures up to 10 different tests in 60 seconds; test results can be viewed on the touchscreen display or transferred into the WaterLink Solutions PRO water analysis program; cloud-based water analysis program stores all records; boasts customizable treatment profiles and reports; use computer or mobile app

Contact: lamotte.com/pool



Lyon Financial Booth 5944

Product: Unsecured Swimming Pool Financing

Features: company offers homeowners buying power with loan options; Lyon Financial offers low rates and long terms for pool financing; pays the pool builder directly throughout the project, ensuring on-time payments and in full

Contact: lyonfinancial.net



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**Magen eco-Energy US
Booth 4039**

Product: Heliocol Solar Pool Heating System

Features: solar pool heating collector uses patented individual-tube design, proprietary hardware, and over-molded construction; received ISO 9001 and 14001 certification; also certified in SRCC OG-100, SRCC OG-400, NSF-50

Contact:
umasolar.com/heliocol/



**Magic Plastics
Booth 7866**

Product: VibeProof Locking Union

Features: available in a variety of products, patented design incorporates the use of a series of strategically placed scallops; hand tightening the nut will engage the lock, preventing the union from loosening or backing out during vibration

Contact: magicplastics.com



**Merlin Industries
Booth 5360**

Product: Merlin Industries Professional Safety Covers

Features: Dura-Mesh II features a combination of sunlight shading, abrasion resistance, tear strength, and burst strength; 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, per maker

Contact: merlinindustries.com



**Mini Bucket Test
Booth 8174**

Product: Mini Bucket Test

Features: designed to be a do-it-yourself, simple, first step if you suspect a pool leak; based on the old "bucket test" to check for a leak, but simpler.

Contact: minibuckettest.com



**Moasure
Booth 5530**

Product: Moasure ONE

Features: Moasure has the ability to measure complex and irregular spaces simply by moving from one point to another, capturing and measuring changes in elevation while simultaneously drawing a diagram of the measured space

Contact: moasure.com

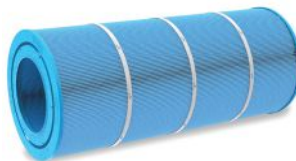


**Natural Chemistry
Booth 8349**

Product: Pool Perfect Max

Features: formulated to simplify the pool care routine by reducing scrubbing of scum lines, frequency of filter cleanings, and removing problem-causing phosphate; add Pool Perfect MAX at a rate of 1 cap per 10,000 gallons weekly

Contact:
naturalchemistry.com



**On Core Filtration
Booth 5952**

Product: EverFlow+

Features: offers a pointbond design to prevent mildew and bacteria buildup; high-filament count spunbond polyester are capped with chlorine and mildew resistant urethane

Contact: oncorefiltration.com



**Pentair
Booth 7148**

Product: IntelliBrite Architectural Series Pool and Spa Lighting

Features: helps deliver a dazzling LED pool lighting experience using an advanced proprietary design; with refined optics and easy automation, the lights are designed to spread light widely and evenly in all directions to minimize hot spots, dark areas, glare and stripes

Contact: pentair.com



Phoenix Pool Products Booth 4353

Product: Serena Spa — Spa Care Kits
Features: contain the essentials needed for spa water care and are designed to make water care maintenance simple; 30-day kits come in two sanitization options: Chlorine or Bromine
Contact: phoenixproductsco.com



PhosLocker Booth 4322

Product: PhosLocker
Features: each ready-to-use pouch gives 30 days of continuous phosphate removal, without clouding
Contact: phoslocker.com



Pool and Spa Enclosures Booth 3942

Product: Air Guard
Features: retractable pool enclosure that allows users to swim all year; helps reduce the intake of cold air in the off season and the outflow of warm air from inside the enclosure; designed to close the gap between the bottom travel rail and ground track
Contact: sunrooms-enclosures.com



Poolmaster Booth 6144

Product: NBA Basketball Floating Thermometer and Chlorine Dispenser
Features: pebble texturing simulates an authentic NBA basketball along with the NBA logoman embossed on both sides of each product; made of weather and chemically resistant materials
Contact: poolmaster.com

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Photo: Joshua Fuller on unsplash.com



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**Poolside Tech
Booth 8172**

Product: The Attendant
Features: from pumps, heaters and actuators to lighting and salt cells, The Attendant can control and monitor any equipment from existing manufacturers in the industry, such as Pentair, Hayward and Jandy
Contact: poolside.tech



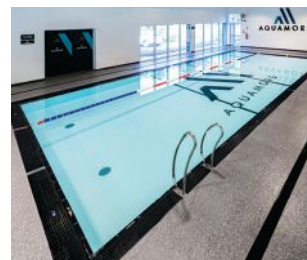
**Prism Hardscapes
Booth 8757**

Product: Verona Fire Water Bowl
Features: made of commercial grade GFRC and designed to interface with all major pool equipment manufacturers
Contact: prismhardscapes.com



**RB Retail & Service
Solutions
Booth 5859**

Product: RB EZ SHOP App
Features: new app provides 'scan and go' shopping to customers within the retail store; syncs with any discounts within the customer's profile and can even be programmed with specials such as BOGO items; all scanned items are quickly pulled up for payment at check out; designed to help build customer loyalty
Contact: rbpoolandspa.com



**RENOLIT
Booth 4441**

Product: RENOLIT SOLID PVC Decking
Features: reinforced PVC membrane created to renovate and waterproof decks on both residential pools and aquatic facilities; 80mil thick waterproof and slip-resistant membrane; solves common deck problems including cracks, chips, peeling paint and more; long-term ease of maintenance
Contact: renolit-alkorplan.com

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**Rico Rock
Booth 4558**

Product: Creative Applications Line
Features: new line of waterfeatures allows pool professionals to create a fully customized water feature by combining the Rico Rock standard waterfall kits; modular water fountains are made of compact, lightweight, cast concrete that are easily mortared together to create consistently beautiful waterfalls; made in USA
Contact: ricorock.com



**SKIN Microplaster
Booth 8948**

Product: SKIN Microplaster
Features: micro-ceramic technology allows for both creativity and utility; fine finish and waterproofing technology can be used both in and out of the water and offers protection from harsh chemicals and water permeation; SKIN can fortify and glamorize any surface while saving time, money and labor, per maker
Contact: skinmicroplaster.com



**Solenis
Booth 7544**

Product: Poolife NST Cal Hypo Chlorine Feeder
Features: designed to keep pool water clear longer this feeder is designed exclusively for Poolife NST Prime Chlorine Tablets; with precision flow control and a steady supply of Cal Hypo sanitizer for up to 3 weeks; this automatic feeder brings worry-free pool care without the hassle of chlorine lock, per maker
Contact: poolife.com



**Spazazz
Booth 6738**

Product: Spa Shock + Aromatherapy
Features: Spazazz launches its first Spa Shock + Aromatherapy available in three fragrances; follow it with Spazazz Spa Crystal or Elixir or to transport the mind, use Body & Soul with the release of Spazazz Full Body Hemp Soak Reset - Ignite - Unwind - Release; available worldwide; samples available at the Spazazz Booth
Contact: spazazz.com

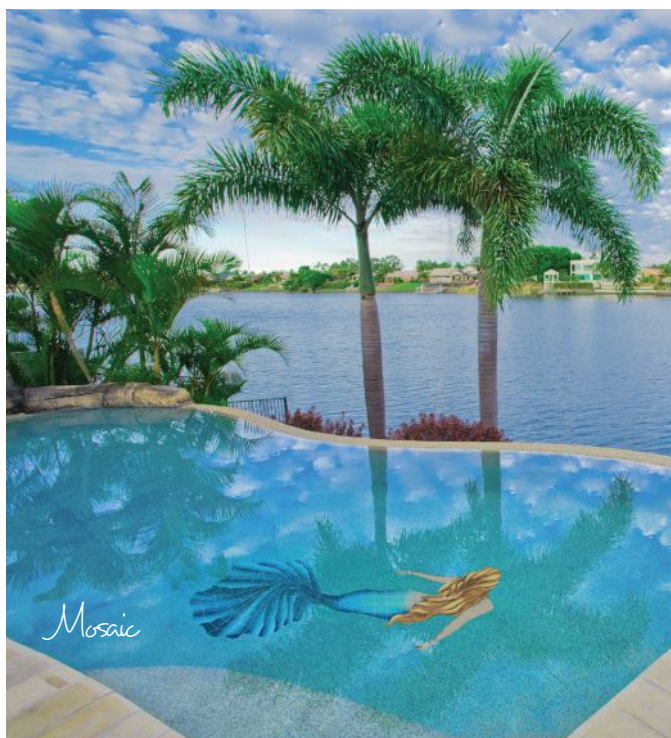


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**Speck Pumps — Pool Products
Booth 6952**

Product: BaduJet Turbo Pro System
Features: designed to provide a smooth and strong swim lane; the system features a magnetically coupled motor for seal-free operation
Contact:
usa.speck-pumps.com



Tara Pool & Outdoor Products

Product: HD Mesh Safety Cover
Features: the densely woven mesh fabric filters out nearly all dust and small particles; it also blocks 99% of sunlight to keep algae from growing so the pool stays clean all winter, per maker
Contact: tarapools.com



**Thursday Pools
Booth 4644**

Product: Goliath Fiberglass Pool
Features: Goliath fiberglass pool now is offered in a smaller size; 14-by-29-feet, and 5-feet-8-inches deep; fits in today's more compact backyards; a smaller size with stairs and seating ledges strategically placed to create a wide-open swim lane right down the center of the pool
Contact: thursdaypools.com



**Universal Rocks
Booth 6559**

Product: Grotto Bay Spa
Features: made with a formulated blend of materials resistant to chips, cracks, scratches and fading, all while being lightweight and maintaining an authentic appearance that blends in with the landscape; three color options: Classic Brown, Castle Rock and Classic Grey
Contact: universalrocks.com



**VacDaddy
Booth 5747**

Product: The VacDaddy Pool Vacuum
Features: lightweight, powerful, easy to use and requires no training, designed to allow vacuumers to service more pools in less time for less money
Contact: thevacdaddy.com



**Waterco USA
Booth 6850**

Product: HRVR Retro-Fit Series Fiberglass Filter
Features: this filter is a direct replacement for Pentair's Triton Series and features Waterco USA's fishtail laterals for improved backwashing hydraulic efficiency; 2-inch bulkhead connections with a reinforced internal wall; saves up to 30% waste water, per maker
Contact: waterco.us



**Water Tech Corp.
Booth 6551**

Product: Water Tech Volt Leaf Vac Recharge
Features: designed to easily remove leaves both on the water surface and pool floors; works independently from filtration systems; detects when unit is in or out of water, automatically turning it on and off; includes the Leaf Vac Head with roller, propeller, two high-capacity leaf bags, a rechargeable, waterproof battery, and a wall charger
Contact: watertechcorp.com



**Zipline/Technidea Corp.
Booth 8369**

Product: ZIPLEVEL PRO-2000 High Precision Altimeter
Features: can be unpacked in two seconds, and work alone with paper-thin precision over unlimited ranges without line-of-sight, distance error, factory calibration or math and pack up case free in under five seconds, per maker; made in USA
Contact: ziplinelevel.com



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