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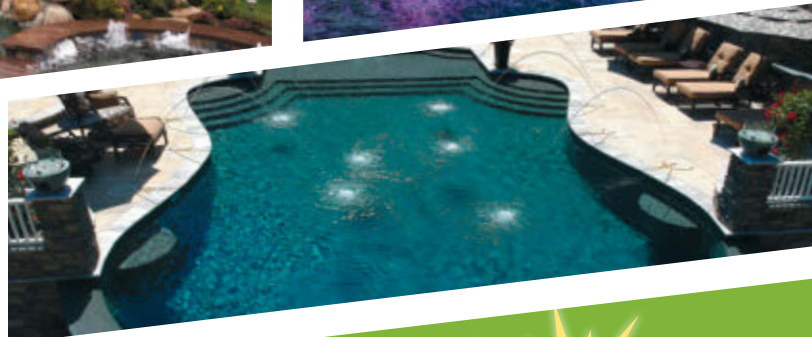
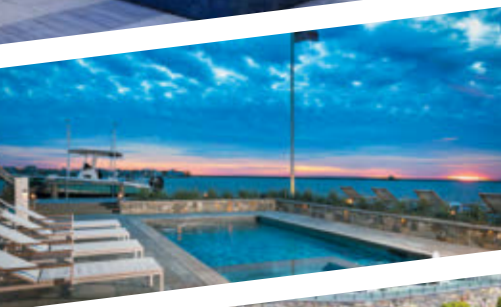
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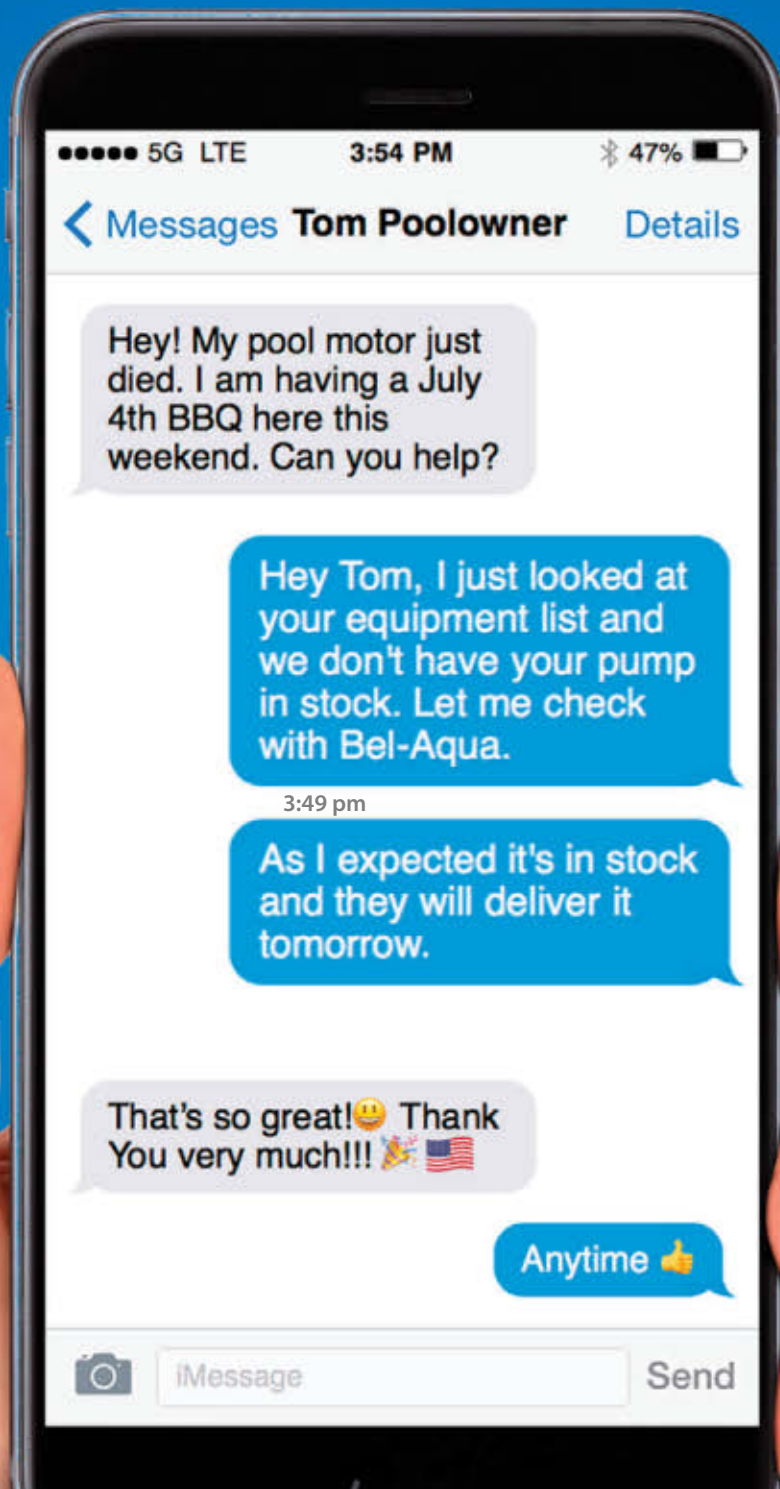


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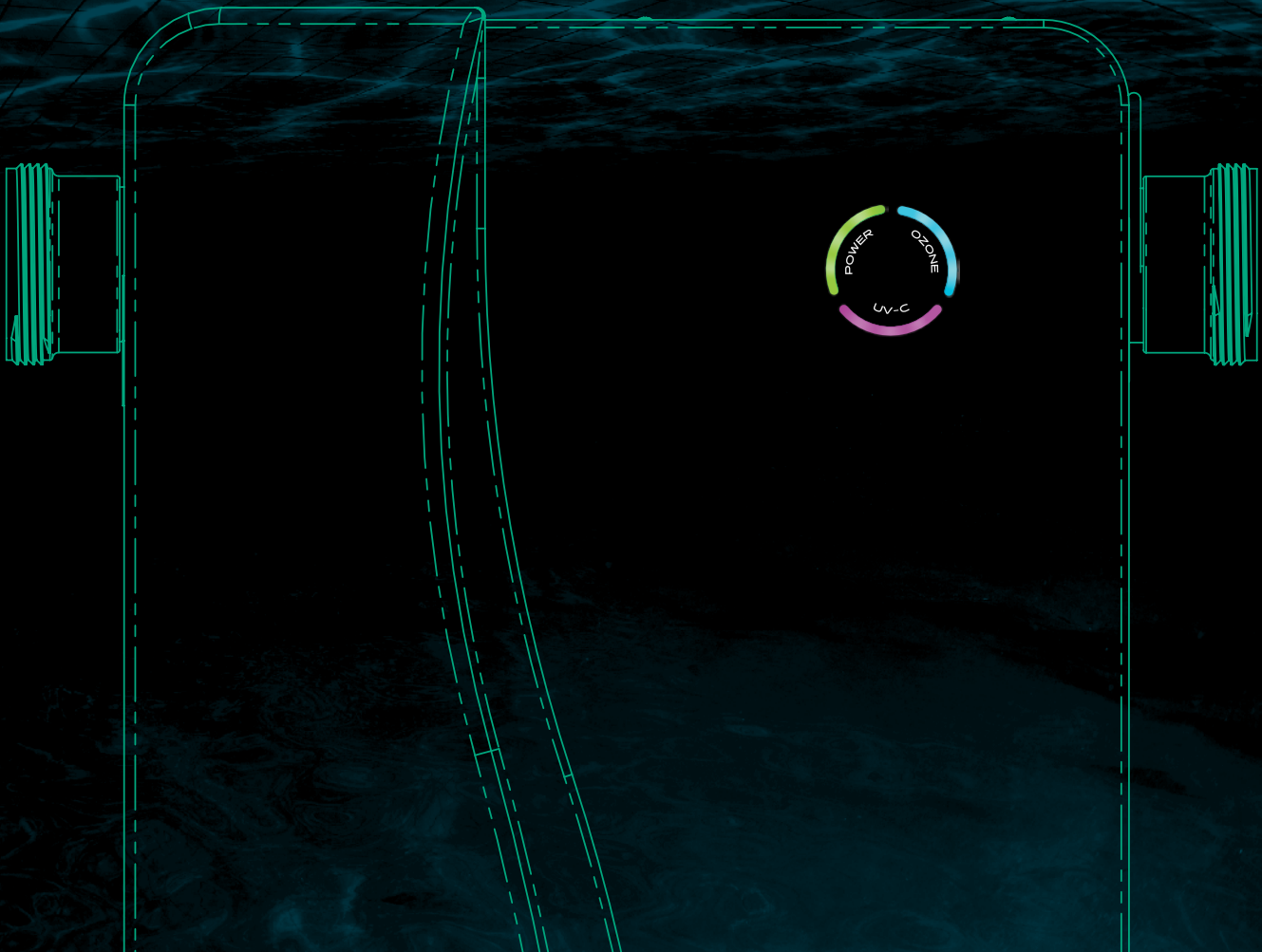
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the Edge contents

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features

5 Ways to Deliver an Astonishing Customer Experience at Retail 10

To remain top of mind and tip of tongue, here are five areas of focus that will help you create and deliver an astonishing customer experience.

by Anne Obarski

Qualifying Prospects for Fun & Profit 13

Who is a qualified lead or prospect? A qualified prospect is one who is ready, willing and able to purchase your products – now.

by Mario D. Rossetti

Differentiating Yourself in the Internet Age 16

When your homeowner views you and your company as their trusted advisors, prescribing the appropriate products for their specific applications, performing installations and upgrades that save them money and help keep their pool sparkling, they should have no reason to price shop for competing proposals.

by Rocco Russo

WORKFORCE 2020: Employee Termination: 8 Steps to Help Minimize Workplace Disruptions 19

There may be times when you need to address certain employee issues. While these interactions can be uncomfortable and discouraging, the way you manage employee discipline can impact almost everything within your organization.

by Frank Preto

The NESPA Foundation: Giving Back to the Community & Industry 22

Protecting Your Business: Should Employees Sign an NCA, NSA or an NDA? 26

Companies in all industries are looking at ways they can protect themselves against the loss of customers and the loss of information or documents they deem proprietary. Some of these approaches are more effective than others.

by Steven B. Getzoff

Cyber Security 30

Your mobile devices are your office on the run. While such technology greatly improves efficiency, it also makes the business extremely susceptible to cyberattacks, which can be devastating.

by Richard Gaynor

The Pool & Spa Show Celebrates the Best in the Industry 34

Pool Contaminants: Phosphates, Metals & Organic Waste 44

Phosphates, metals and organic waste are the three main contaminants that cause havoc in pool water. Identifying the sources of these contaminants can help pool professionals keep pool water clear.

by Chris Marciano

Aquatic Facilities Can Save 50 Percent on Power with VFD Drives 47

Over the past few years, aquatic professionals have learned that the fastest way to lower energy consumption is to reduce energy use in the pool pump room.

by John Watt

Special Feature: Distributors of the Northeast 52



On our cover:

The Pool & Spa Show Celebrates Award-Winning Pools, Spas and Water Features

Join us for a look at some of the top winners from NESPA's Outstanding Achievement Awards Competition 2019. See all of the winners at The Pool & Spa Show from January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center.

departments

The President's Message 9

Index of Advertisers 53

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Published by



1200 Portage Avenue, Suite 200

Winnipeg, MB R3G 0T5

800-665-2456

fax: 204-947-20478

www.naylor.com

Publisher: Kim Davies

Editor: Leslee Masters

Project Manager:

Angela McDougall

Publication Director:

Brian Hoover

Advertising Sales:

Maria Antonation, Brad Bullard,

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Marketing:

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Work the Pool & Spa Show Strategically to Boost Profits in 2020

by Mitch Katz CBP, CSP, CPO

YOUR VISION MAY have been blurry before, but with 2020 upon us, everything should be much clearer! Take advantage of it and let this be the year you and your team soar to new heights. The best part is that you don't have to go it alone because The Northeast Spa & Pool Association is here to help.

Attending the Pool and Spa Show is a great way start off the year with a bang. But be strategic about how you and your employees spend your time in Atlantic City. A well-planned show can help your company achieve greater profits in 2020.

Don't wait until you get to the show to decide what classes to take; plan in advance. Analyze how you did in 2019, then seek out specific opportunities to improve upon your performance in 2020.

Hopefully, by this time you have a complete 2019 profit & loss (p&l) statement and maybe even a 2020 operating budget. These are great tools to guide you toward specific topics you should be seeking out at the show and even throughout the year at NESPA and your chapter.

Not sure how to use your p&l statement as a tool to make better decisions? We have an expert in Jay Forte, who will speak in detail about this on January 28 at the show. In the meantime, start by drawing some simple conclusions from your p&l statement; it will help you make your time at the show even more impactful.

For instance, you might realize that you need to increase your revenue. You can create a plan to find all the classes and exhibitors at the show that can help do that. (Hint: it might just be raising prices, as opposed to selling more work.) You might realize your gross profit is too low to cover your overhead expenses and you need to find a way to buy product at better prices or manage labor time more effectively. Doing either of these will definitely increase your gross profit. If you can't increase your gross profit because you are selling as much as you can at the best prices you can and are being super-efficient with your resources, then you might need to lower some of your overhead expenses. Create a plan to speak with insurance providers, marketing people, payroll companies and education trainers. Many vendors at the show can likely help you.

I understand it can get costly to bring your team to the show, so make sure you do what you can to get the highest return on your investment. Discuss in advance what you expect your team to get out of it. Set an expectation about getting to classes on time and what you want the team to get out of walking the exhibit floor. It can be pretty overwhelming for newcomers, or even someone who has attended before.

Create a document with specific questions or information you are looking for your team to find while walking the floor. You can make it a game or a competition, like a scavenger hunt. Ask your team to list three products that can help remove copper stains from plaster; or explain the process of finding a leak in a vinyl liner swimming pool – things they'd have to speak with exhibitors to learn. Plan a time at the show each day to get your team together to talk about the things each person has learned that day in classes. Have a meeting when you get back from the show to review all the information everyone gathered on the show floor. Make it mandatory.

On a final note, we are always looking for volunteers to help our great association throughout the year. There are numerous benefits of volunteering, like networking with your peers and learning from the best minds in the business. When you volunteer at The Pool & Spa Show in Atlantic City, you can even reduce the cost of attending programs. Ask us! **I**

Mitch Katz, CBP, CSP, CPO, is the 2019-2020 president of Northeast Spa & Pool Association.

5 Ways to Deliver an Astonishing Customer Experience at Retail

by Anne Obarski

THE FACE OF retail has changed. Stores that have been around for decades are gone. Amazon puts fear into every business owner. Yet there are many companies that remain healthy by not worrying about their competition, but focusing on their customers first.

What makes your pool customers get in the car and drive to your location? What makes them recommend your products or services over using the internet? What turns your first-time customer into a loyal customer you have a relationship with? To remain top of mind and tip of tongue, here are five areas of focus that will help you create and deliver an astonishing customer experience.

What is your customer seeing, thinking and doing at these touchpoints on their journey in your store. How much time, money and energy have you invested in each? Could you calculate your return on investment for each area?

THE EXTERIOR

Does the outside of your pool store set the level of expectation for your customer? Is it easy to find; does it have excellent signage; is the parking lot neat and clean?

Customers will Google how to get to your location and can opt to see a picture of it before they get there. Is that picture accurate and current? Would anything about the exterior make them think less or more about your store? A well maintained exterior and entrance sets the stage for what they will experience once they walk through the door. Take a serious look at what a first-time customer would see and make the necessary changes to make it an inviting one.



Pool Doctor of Rhode Island's exterior is clean, bright and inviting.

FIRST IMPRESSION IS A VISUAL IMPRESSION

Eighty-five percent of what people remember is through sight. So what your customers see first is important.

- Create a transition from outside to inside, a “decompression zone.”
- Trigger the senses.
- See your store through a woman's eyes.

Retail benchmarks suggest that there should be a decompression zone right after walking in the store. A small area of about six feet that is uncluttered and inviting will allow the customer to sense that they have left the busy outside world for the comfort of your store. What is your customer seeing, smelling hearing, feeling and touching when they come into your store? Engage their senses. *Chain Store Age*

research shows that 85 percent of all business decisions are made by women. Look around your store to discern how you are attracting the female customer. Is your entrance clean and free of fingerprints and taped flyers? Does the store look fresh and clean? Are the colors inviting or drab and boring? If your customer is coming in for maintenance supplies, are you displaying interesting décor items that she could pick up while there? Remember, first impressions are important; the last impression is priceless.

PRODUCT PRESENTATION



PHOTO COURTESY OF VALLEY POOL & SPA

Beautiful, inviting pool store interior.

Have you ever walked into a store and felt sensory overload? Your brain is telling you that there are too many choices. Successful pool retailers maximize their square footage and calculate their sales per square foot throughout their store. Retailers direct the flow of a “journey” in a store by creating traffic patterns that allow them to experience the entire store.

Research shows that customers look right at a 45-degree angle when they enter a store. So what is on your “power wall” right now? Every item in your store should earn the right to be there. Making a statement with your pool products shows the customer you believe in those products because of their past sales performance. Strategies for good merchandising involve: making a statement; informational signing; and frequent changes.

These days customers expect an experience, and they want anything but the typical. Go for the unusual, the unique items and ways to display them on your “pool stage,” and your customers will describe your store as an exciting place to shop.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VALLEY POOL & SPA

WHERE'S YOUR PINK PIG?

What is your unique marketing advantage? How do your customers describe your store? Is it the location, a sign, a logo, a person or something unusual that you carry that makes your store remarkable, repeatable and shareable?

I like to share this story about a “pink pig.” I was speaking at a tradeshow where there were hundreds of cooking grills displayed.

I found that walking the show floor was...frankly, boring. I came around an aisle and there she was: a smoker grill that looked like a pink pig. She was painted pink and even had eye lashes. I couldn't stop looking at her. I asked the sales rep: “So who buys a “pink pig” smoker?” He immediately said, “Dealers do...some roll her out in the parking lot, fire her up, put brats and burgers and hotdogs on her and people all know that the store down the street has “the pink pig” out and you better stop by.”

What's your “pink pig”? What do you do differently than Amazon or your competition down the street that causes your customers to be wowed, tell their friends about it and even post on social media? The key to being unique is discovering what item your customer can't find elsewhere, getting it and then displaying it in an unusual way.

THE PEOPLE

Customers make assumptions about your hiring, training and leadership. Use my F.I.T. strategy to get the right people in the right seats on the right bus...your bus!

- Find the match
- Interview
- Train/performance

Your staff is the face of the company. Sometimes the lowest paid, newest hired, least trained person is dealing with your customers the most. Spend enough time interviewing and hiring the right people for each position you have. Be the leader everyone wants to work for. Develop and deliver an educational training program that sets the bar for performance and then makes sure that everyone is at that bar or exceeding performance. Your staff is a group of retail pool specialists, not clerks. They are the reason your customers choose to come into your store vs. buying on the internet. Get rid of those “un-wow” employees who are toxic to your team. Your customers will thank you for having great employees who care about the customer and are ready and willing to help in any way they can.

The word “astonish” means to surprise or greatly impress someone. What are you currently doing in your outdoor living store to surprise and impress your customers? It's all in the details. People say, “Don't sweat the small stuff,” and I say, “It's ALL small stuff.” Go be astonishing! ■



Anne Obarski is founder of Merchandise Concepts. Her “Retail Snoops”™ program extensively researches all aspects of customer service. Obarski has gathered priceless knowledge after mystery shopping more than 2,000 stores and businesses over 15 years.

Anne Obarski will present a session titled “The A.C.E. Model: 8 Steps to Delivering an Astonishing Customer Experience” at The Pool & Spa Show January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center. See a complete list of show seminars by clicking on www.thepoolspashow.com.

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Qualifying Prospects

for Fun & Profit

by Mario D. Rossetti

ONE OF THE most contentious topics in the water industry, after value versus price, is qualifying prospects. There seems to be an antipathy and, in many cases, even open hostility by many companies to simply discuss the possibility of qualifying prospects prior to setting a personal meeting with them. This is the result of both a fear of the process and a misunderstanding of the value that the qualification process offers to both the company and prospect.

WHY MANY FEAR THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS

In the recent past, when leads were slow and sales even slower, the major reason stated by most for dreading the qualification process was the fear of eliminating any chance for a sale. Every opportunity to meet with a prospect was considered so precious and important that the risk of losing a sale through a rigorous, or even cursory,

qualification process was considered to be unacceptable.

Now that the economy is booming, interest rates are low and consumer confidence is strong, those fears seem groundless. So why do they still persist? One reason is because we fear what we do not understand. But another reason is that there is an element of preparation necessary to become highly proficient at qualifying. Most will not invest the time and energy to qualify properly.

WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT

The qualification process is all about collecting information so that you are in a position to better help your prospects make the right decisions. This is true even if the process helps to determine that a particular prospect is not a fit for your company.

It should always be a friendly and initially light investigatory process. Our industry has pretty much shunned this practice; most likely due to fear and lack

of professional knowledge. Qualifying also provides you a unique opportunity to warm up to your prospect and show your interest in them and their families.

REASONS TO QUALIFY

When does the prospect want the pool – now or in five years? Studies have shown that the decision to purchase a pool may take as long as five years to make. That's a significant amount of time. Once the decision is made, however, consumers want the progression from discussion to completion to be accomplished as quickly as possible. Qualifying allows the salesperson the rationale and information to provide the pool, or other products and services that meet the financial requirements or limitations of the prospect, as quickly as possible.

Sell prospect on your company. People call or email you primarily because they have already made the decision to own a pool. You don't have to sell them on the

idea of a pool; all you have to do is provide enough reasons for them to work with you and to own *your* pool. Qualifying allows you to invest your precious time where it is most needed.

Who is a qualified lead or prospect? A qualified prospect is one who is ready, willing and able to purchase your products – now. Ready, because their timing is immediate (or within your building window); willing, because they want a pool and will move forward when they are satisfied that they have made the right decisions; able, because they are financially capable of owning your pool. The only way to determine if these qualifiers are all present is to ask pertinent qualifying questions.

Maximize ROI on ad budgets. Contrary to popular belief, advertising should not simply be designed to create leads. Leads in themselves have little intrinsic value. Advertising should be designed to create qualified leads. This is actually where the qualification process should begin. What good are leads that create prospects that won't qualify for your pools? Only qualified leads have value.

For example, if your company has decided to build an upscale pool and the ad brings in calls from entry level buyers, you have created leads with very little or no value. And you will still have had to pay for advertising that doesn't work. In other words, you have wasted advertising dollars.

Save time and more money. There is little sense in trying to provide products or services for those who don't want, need or cannot afford your pools or spas. It is a waste of their time and most often produces bad feelings and negative internet reports. By the way, it is also a waste of your time and energy and interferes with the opportunity for the success that you may have enjoyed by investing your time with more qualified prospects. On the flip side, you may also discover those who are qualified and ready to move forward immediately.

Increase company morale and loyalty. When prospects are qualified to move forward immediately, the salesperson has a greater likelihood of success. This will increase excitement and commission income and, of course, company profits. And that is always a good thing. Everyone

in the company benefits from working with qualified consumers.

Increase confidence. You want to say "yes." After all, to salespeople, "yes" earns commissions. But sometimes we want to say "yes" too often – so much, in fact, that we appear desperate. We allow prospects to create the playing field and then we attempt to play successfully on it.

Think of when you were single and dating. If you asked someone out and they perceived that you were desperate for a date, you probably didn't do so well. When you were confident, bold and assertive, your chances for that date were greatly enhanced. It's the same when selling. Appear too desperate or anxious and your chances for success are significantly reduced.

Show prospects you have value. Qualifying lets prospects know that you are also investigating them, just as they will be investigating you. They've probably never had anyone tell them that they were interested in determining if they were a fit for the company. You have value, too, and are not just another greedy salesperson desperate to separate them from their money.

HOW TO QUALIFY

Set parameters. In order to properly qualify prospects, everyone must first know what qualifications should be met. Create potential guidelines. For example:

- Are there certain parts of town that are more likely than others to fit your building parameters, areas where the homes are generally valuable enough to support the pool or spa that you want to construct?
- Travel time is another potential consideration. Clearly outline those geographic areas in which you are willing to build. Decide if this will be a hard and fast rule or one in which each salesperson should apply caution. Some discretion should be applied, perhaps based upon potential profit or travel multipliers.
- Size or amenity factors. Should the size of the pool be a factor, or is it the amenities that will dictate the value? This is an important issue, as amenities often increase the price and profit as quickly as the pool perimeter size.

- Financial. Here's the "able" part of the equation. You may do all else well and lose it right here. Don't feel self-conscious or afraid of asking the financial questions. The least you should ask is what steps have they taken to investigate financing options. Be prepared to hear "We've already taken care of that." Really? What if they tell you that they are paying cash? Cash is not a bad option, is it? Believe it or not, it may be. When you hear this response, why not mention that "I appreciate that response. In fact, many of our clients have mentioned the same thing; however, after a little investigation they found that they actually saved money by financing. It will only take a few minutes to determine if this is the case for you. Why not invest a few minutes to find out for yourself?" Then you can put them in touch with your favorite financing source to discuss options. You just might turn into a hero. In any event, you will show yourself to be professionally competent to advise them on this and future purchases.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are many other considerations and parameters that could be listed, but those mentioned here will provide a good start for future investigations. And by the way, do not be fearful of your prospects rejecting your qualifying questions. If approached correctly, they won't. When accomplished properly, your prospects will appreciate your concern for them and their time. The limiting factor for qualifying is almost always the fear within the salesperson. ■

Mario Rossetti is president of Rossetti Enterprises, a company specializing in providing value-based training solutions to help clients achieve increased sales success with the highest possible profits.

Mario Rossetti will present a seminar on this topic at The Pool & Spa Show January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center. Visit www.thePoolSpaShow.com for the latest information.

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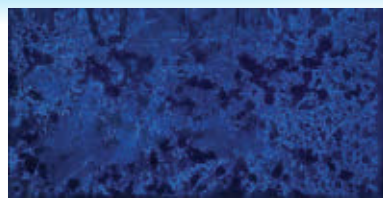


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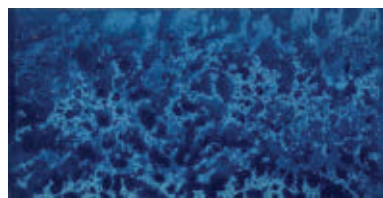
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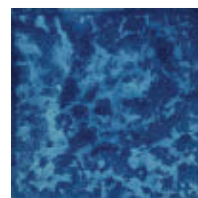
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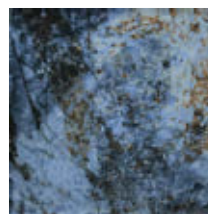


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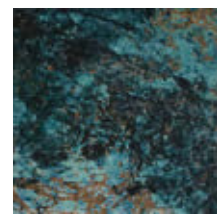


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Differentiating Yourself in the Internet Age

by Rocco Russo



WELCOME TO THE (dis) information age! The internet has been presenting challenges to our industry for quite some time. When a homeowner reviews an equipment replacement proposal, for example, their tendency has been to research this possible purchase on the internet. Reviews of products, DIY videos, service and repair blogs as well as purchasing options tend to give homeowners a false sense of being educated and accomplished. Allowing homeowners to purchase equipment presents the possibility of installing products that are not applicable for their pool. This has the potential to create situations that could result in personal injury or property damage. Pool service and repair technicians attempting to combat these trends should develop strategies for those conversations, where homeowners have price shopped against the pro's proposals.

BECOME YOUR CUSTOMER'S VALUED PARTNER

Being able to offer a one-stop shop has become critical. Understanding and being properly licensed to connect gas hook-ups, water and electrical connections brings a level of convenience your customers will appreciate, and they'll be willing to pay for it. Otherwise, homeowners may have to call different contractors in order to complete an installation. At that point, which contractor would get the call in the event of a breakdown? We can remove the guesswork by furnishing all applicable services and providing a convenient experience.

Create enough interest to get your client to talk further. Generate enthusiasm. Question them to find out their exact needs, then provide solutions through your products and services. Focus on promoting a positive experience, not the transaction.

EDUCATE HOMEOWNERS ON WARRANTY AND QUALITY

Homeowners can enjoy extended warranties when purchasing equipment through dealers that are involved in manufacturer's partner programs. Most likely they will have zero warranty coverage when purchasing equipment online. Your proposals shouldn't include items that are found easily at an online retail site. Online direct to retail purchases could cost less than your wholesale price. These items may be "stale stock" that has old serial numbers and lack improvements made by the manufacturers. These aren't the latest and greatest that manufacturers have to offer, but your customers can rest assured what you install will be. Inform them that you'll not only be replacing an expired component, but you'll also be bringing the installation up to current codes and standards, in accordance with the manufacturer's detailed instructions.

Also, offer discounts on their first regularly scheduled maintenance. Perform preventive maintenance in order to ensure equipment longevity and reliability. Stressing that maintenance is required at the point-of-sale prepares the customer for that inevitable cost related fact. This is also another differentiator between not only you and internet sales, but also you and your competitors.

SUPPORT YOUR CUSTOMER

Everybody's equipment breaks on the Friday before their kid's birthday weekend, or is that just a line designed to create urgency on our part? Another valuable approach would be to ensure same-day or next-day service if there's a problem throughout the warranty

period. Being available, accessible and capable of backing up that product purchase lets customers know that you believe in the quality of what you're proposing.

When your homeowner views you and your company as their trusted advisors, prescribing the appropriate products for their specific applications, performing installations and upgrades that save them money and help keep their pool sparkling, they should have no reason to price shop for competing proposals. When they know that you're committed to providing the perfect pool experience for them so that they can maximize their backyard leisure time, you've developed a customer for life.

Feeling forced to do work that you don't particularly care about creates stress, whereas performing tasks that you truly enjoy creates excitement and enthusiasm. Share that passion with your clients and let them see why they made the right choice in hiring the right professional for their needs. Our love for our industry is something that the internet couldn't possibly duplicate. **I**

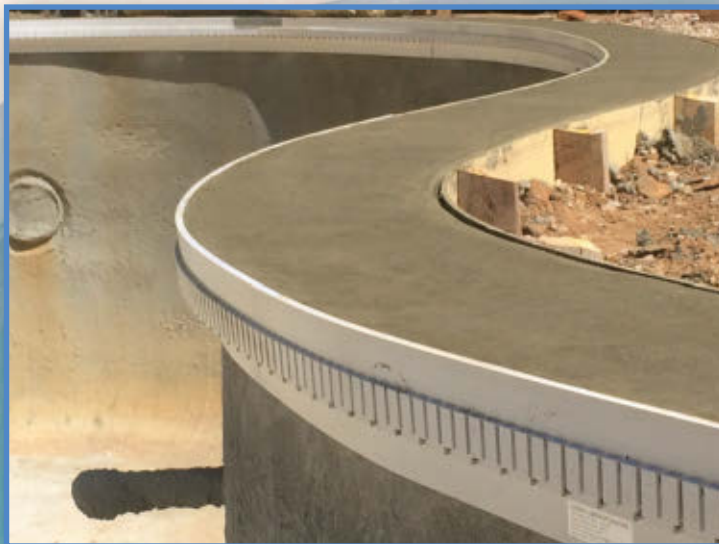


Rocco Russo is regional trainer, east, at Zodiac Pool Systems.

Rocco Russo will speak on "Selling Against the Internet" at The Pool and Spa Show in Atlantic City January 28-30, 2020. Go to www.ThePoolSpaShow.com for a complete schedule.

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WORKFORCE 2020

Employee Termination: 8 Steps to Help Minimize Workplace Disruptions

by Frank Preto

YOU HOPE THAT every employee's tenure at your business is highly successful and long lasting; however, there may be times when you need to address certain employee issues. While these interactions can be uncomfortable and discouraging, the way you manage employee discipline can impact almost everything within your organization – from productivity, profitability and employee morale, to personnel turnover and, potentially, your exposure to litigation.

Sometimes it becomes necessary to discharge or terminate an employee. When this happens, supervisors and managers need to know how to manage the disruption to the company as well as to the specific employee. The way you communicate an employee's termination may impact the likelihood of whether or not they decide to file a wrongful discharge suit against your company. The following suggested guidelines can be useful when preparing for an employee termination.

1. *Carefully document the process:* Review employee performance documentation with your HR department. Include all the information surrounding the reason for their termination, with supporting details such as the results of previous performance reviews, warnings and

disciplinary actions. Create a record of the effective date of termination and place it in the employee's file. Consider creating a termination letter that includes the date of termination and a clear outline of the status of their benefits. The letter should be delivered to the employee at the termination meeting.

2. *Make sure the employee's final paycheck is complete.* Review state final pay laws and ensure all applicable remuneration will be included in the employee's final paycheck. This may include reimbursement for unpaid expenses, commissions and bonuses. Terminated employees may also be entitled to payment for accrued but unused vacation, personal or sick time. Prior to the termination meeting, review your state laws for the requirements regarding when the final paycheck must be issued.

3. *Reclaim company property.* Upon termination, the employee should be asked to relinquish all company-issued property, including laptops, tablets, cell phones, ID badges, parking passes and keys, as well as any company documents in their possession. If these items are kept at the employee's home, schedule a time to retrieve them.

4. *Schedule a time to collect personal items.* Some businesses prefer to have employees pick up personal items immediately following notice of termination. Others opt for an after-hours time for them to gather their personal belongings under supervision.

5. *Be prepared to discuss benefits.* Employees enrolled in a company-sponsored group health insurance program may be entitled to continued health insurance coverage in compliance with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) or a similar state law. It may be appropriate to give departing employees a continuation notice and a benefits status letter outlining any relevant information regarding the company's life insurance and retirement plan programs where applicable. Employers in some states are also legally obligated to provide terminated employees with a notice explaining how they can claim unemployment benefits.

6. *Ask for current contact information.* It may be necessary to correspond with a former employee in the future (for example, to send a Form W-2 at the year's end). Upon termination, be sure you have updated contact information and ask them to alert

you of future residence changes in the near term.

7. Contact your IT department. An increasingly important step is to notify your IT department or network administrator. Coordinate with them to cancel the terminated employee's access to company computer and telephone systems. Ask the employee to relinquish their passwords and any other information that involves accessing company records and telephone messages, both on-site and remotely. Also request that the employee's building entry security code or access card be disabled and, if applicable, their parking pass disabled or returned.

8. Alert staff and customers to the employee's departure. In cases where the employee has worked closely with certain staff or customers, let them know this individual has left the company. Reassure customers that business will continue as normal during the transition period. Inform all involved who will take over the previous employee's responsibilities.

It is not necessary to provide details about the reason for the termination.

COSTS OF TERMINATING AN EMPLOYEE

Terminating an employee represents real, hard costs that can impact your business' bottom line. These costs might include paying out any separation benefits such as severance or accrued time off. Subsequently, your business may be faced with the challenge of filling the vacancy, and this can mean absorbing the costs of temporary employees or paying overtime to existing staff to cover the gap. Recruiting a replacement can be an expensive process as well, including placing job advertisements, using recruiters or placement agency fees. There may also be related staff costs for the time spent interviewing, and in some cases paying for candidate expenses to travel for interviews. Finally, there are training costs associated with getting new employees up to speed, which may include internal training classes or even off-site educational seminars.

Indirect costs of termination are harder to quantify, but ultimately may be equally or more difficult on your business. Excessive turnover can cause employee morale to drop

and have a significant impact on the overall company culture. Productivity setbacks and the potential impact on quality and customer service can be costly as well. Losing key employees can damage relationships with clients, hurt your industry reputation and confuse the overall positioning of your business. Depending on the employee, there may be a cost of future innovation and acquiring new clients as well. ■



Frank Preto has been a human resource consultant at Paychex for eight years. He has earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in business administration from East Carolina University.

Rose Ludgate, Paychex, will present a session titled "Effective Leadership Skills: From Managing to Disciplining Employees" at The Pool & Spa Show January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center. Register online at www.thepoolspashow.com.



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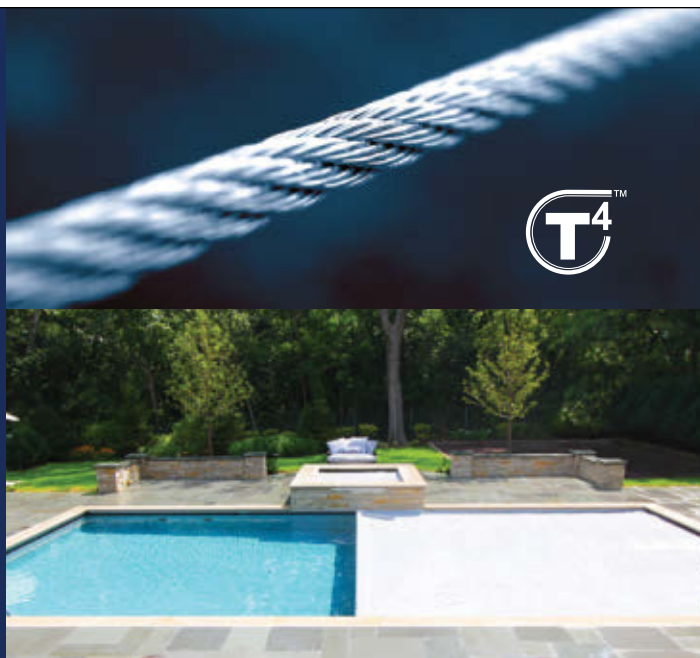
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THE NESPA FOUNDATION

Giving Back to the Community & Industry

THERE IS A strong current of generosity, commitment to service and giving back to the community that runs through membership of the Northeast Spa & Pool Association (NESPA). Whether it is a swim safely program needing funds, a pool constructed for a wounded warrior who needs to regain his strength after giving his all for this country, Special Olympics funding or support for numerous other educational and safety efforts, NESPA members are there to help.

That's why it was no surprise in 2009 when NESPA members from our 4-state region (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut) agreed to create and generously fund the NESPA Foundation, a 501(c)(3) educational non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing professionalism of the pool and spa industry through promotion, education and research, safety and charitable endeavors.

"We in the pool and spa business are lucky to be in an industry that literally enhances physical and mental health, boosts happiness and helps bring family and friends together in a most delightful way. Through the NESPA Foundation's efforts we continue to enrich the public's pool and spa experience with our charitable endeavors," said John Lochren, president, Solar Pool Enclosures of N.Y. Inc. and chairman of the NESPA Foundation.

RECENT AWARDS BY THE FOUNDATION

Among its many efforts, NESPA Foundation recently awarded grants to two educational programs that provide children with life-saving water skills while introducing them to a lifelong love of swimming.



KidSwim Long Island was awarded a \$4,600 grant from the foundation that it is using to expand its water safety initiative focused on educating pre-school and elementary school-age children on the rules of water safety. In the past three years,

"We in the pool and spa business are lucky to be in an industry that literally enhances physical and mental health, boosts happiness and helps bring family and friends together in a most delightful way."



John Lochren, president, Solar Pool Enclosures of N.Y. Inc. and chairman of NESPA Foundation

the program has given out more than 100,000 water safety booklets while performing more than 150 water safety book readings, character/puppet shows and assemblies. KidSwim has already reached more than 37,000 children ranging from nursery school-age to the 5th grade.

"Long Island has over 600 miles of shoreline and it's estimated that one in six Long Island homes has a swimming pool," said CJ DelVaglio, former president of Long Island Pool & Spa Association (LIPSA). "The chance that children in our community will be near water is very high. KidSwim gives them the tools they need to be safer not just in the summer, but year-round. With the support of the NESPA Foundation, we look forward to another successful season of teaching children in Long Island about water safety."

In another effort, the foundation awarded a \$5,000 grant to New York State's Learn to Swim Program in support of its sixth season of the Learn to Swim Initiative. The program encourages New Yorkers with age-eligible children to sign up for free swimming lessons that are focused on getting kids acquainted with the water in a safe and fun way. Since



its start in 2013, the Learn to Swim Program has grown each year and expanded its reach to serve low-income urban inner-city communities, as well as rural populations across all of New York state where swimming options and instruction are limited.

“With continuing support from partners like the NESPA Foundation, this important program has served more than 20,000 kids at nearly two dozen parks every summer for seven straight years,” said State Parks Commissioner Erik Kulleseid. “Together, we are taking steps that can save lives.”

“The foundation is thrilled to support these fantastic programs focused on providing our children and their families with key water safety information,” said Lochren. “But we are also open to supporting many other initiatives.” He said that organizations in need of funding should contact the NESPA Foundation. The foundation awards grants on a rolling basis throughout the year. Grant requests can be submitted at any time during the year.

If you would like to be considered for a grant, please send a letter of interest to the foundation as follows: NESPA Foundation, 6B South Gold Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08691; ph: 609-689-9111, fax: 609-689-9110, email: info@nespa-foundation.org.

Naturally, to do its work effectively, the foundation is always in need of additional donations to expand its programming to more worthy causes, according to Lochren. For those within the industry or outside of the industry who want to donate, please call the foundation at (609) 689-9111 or you may send your donation check to: NESPA Foundation, 6B South Gold Drive, Hamilton, NJ 08691. Please include a letter with your contact information with your donation. For those who would simply like to learn more about the foundation’s work, please call NESPA Executive Director Dominick Mondì at 609-689-9111. |



NESPA FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP

The NESPA Foundation was created in 2009 as a 501(c) (3). Its board of directors includes:

Chairman

John Lochren, Solar Pool Enclosures of N.Y. Inc.

Vice President

George Kazdin, Kazdin Pools & Spas

Secretary/Treasurer

Mark Warshaw, Bel Aqua Pool Supply, Inc.

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Protecting Your Business

by Steven B. Getzoff

POOL AND SPA manufacturers, retailers, dealers and service professionals are increasingly concerned about the need to protect their customer base, customer lists and other proprietary information. Builders at many of the classes I've presented have expressed the concern that time and money invested in elevating their crew members or their sales force may end up benefiting a competitor when that person joins another pool company or even starts his or her own business.

As a result, companies in all industries are looking at ways they can protect themselves against the loss of customers and the loss of information or documents they deem proprietary. Some of these approaches are more effective than others.

THE NON-COMPETE AGREEMENT (NCA)

Non-Compete Agreements (commonly referred to as NCAs) are commonly used

in connection with the sale of a business. If I'm buying your dental practice, for example, and paying significant money for the goodwill and patient access the practice has developed, I have a legitimate interest in ensuring that you can't open a new practice in the same town and reclaim your patients. The same rationale applies to the sale of a pool building business or a service business. NCAs used in this context will invariably be upheld, even for as long as 10-15 years, and within a reasonable geographic scope.

In recent decades, however, companies have attempted to impose NCAs on their employees, all the way down to low-wage hourly workers. Nail and hair stylists have been required to sign non-compete agreements prohibiting them from working at or opening a competing salon, even if they have been terminated without cause. This has resulted in adopted and pending legislation in many states invalidating NCAs outright, or at least limiting their

use based on pay scale or other factors such as grounds for departure.

Because an NCA restricts a person's ability to earn a living, courts also tend to disfavor these types of agreements in the workplace. In New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, for example, a court will invalidate an NCA unless the company can show a compelling need and the agreement is appropriately limited in time and scope. What is appropriate will depend on the stature and compensation of the employee. A CEO or VP of research and development might reasonably be restricted from taking a position in a competing firm for a year, whereas a field employee or sales rep might not be restricted at all. For this reason companies are turning their focus to other forms of protection that do not tend to run afoul of the courts and recent laws.

Because the law may vary from state to state, any NCA should include a choice of law clause.

THE NON-SOLICITATION AGREEMENT (NSA)

The non-solicitation agreement (NSA) has been used with increasing frequency, particularly with sales personnel. A properly written non-solicitation agreement does not restrict a person's ability to work at a competing firm. It does limit their ability to take away or, in some cases even call on, existing customers or leads that they pursued or serviced at their prior company for a reasonable period of time, typically 6 to 12 months. When properly drafted, these agreements are often enforced by the courts.

THE NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT (NDA)

All employers have a right to protect trade secrets and other confidential information. This can include formulas, test methods, production methods, pricing, sales and marketing strategies, and information they have acquired about existing or potential customers. Unlike NCAs or NSAs, the scope of an NDA can extend indefinitely. Employees with access to this type of information should be required to sign an NDA. The document should 1) accurately identify and acknowledge

the type of information deemed confidential and proprietary; 2) include an acknowledgement of the irreparable harm the company will suffer from the revelation of any such information; 3) cite the employer's right to seek injunctive relief in the event of a breach; and 4) include a choice of law clause.

To enforce an NDA, a company will need to demonstrate that the information in question is actually proprietary and has been treated as such by the company. In making this determination, a court will look to the company's own internal practices. Has the information been appropriately restricted within the company on a need to know basis, or can any employee access it? Has the company shared the information with outsiders on its own? Are documents marked confidential, physically or electronically? Materials that are readily accessible beyond a need-to-know inner circle will likely not be considered proprietary. Similarly, a collection of publicly available information, such as names, addresses and phone numbers will likely not be considered proprietary. However, if additional information is

added to the list, such as buying patterns, sales margins, or even family or other personal information sales personnel might use, it is far more likely to be protected.

Pool and spa companies have a legitimate need to protect their customer base and proprietary information. This is best accomplished by engaging a legal professional to create a document that addresses these needs, without running afoul of emerging laws and court rulings. ■



Steven B. Getzoff is partner in the law firm of Schwab Katz and Dwyer and outside counsel to Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (formerly APSP) and other companies in the industry.

Steven Getzoff will present a seminar titled "What's in Your Contract" at The Pool & Spa Show from January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center. Visit www.thePoolSpaShow.com for the latest information.

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CYBER SECURITY

Protecting Your Business from Disaster

by Richard Gaynor

AS A SWIMMING pool and spa business owner, you want to operate your business effectively and profitably. Armed with computers, tablets, mobile devices and cell phones, you use technology to your advantage.

Your mobile devices are your office on the run. You access valuable information from these devices, including customer orders, employee personal data, inventory and more. To you, this information is priceless. Cybercriminals and hackers are banking on your computers and mobile devices being unsecured. While such technology greatly improves efficiency, it also makes the business extremely susceptible to cyberattacks, which can be devastating.

Cybercriminals are getting more creative with their cyberattacks as well. Almost all businesses use computers and mobile devices, which puts them at risk to cybercriminals. The size of the business no longer matters; big or small, the venomous effect of a cyber-attack can be devastating.

According to the 2019 Mobile Security Index:

- 86 percent of respondents agreed that mobile threats are growing faster than other types of threats.
- 64 percent of those who were compromised said they suffered downtime.

- 48 percent say they sacrificed mobile security for business objectives.
- 83 percent agreed that organizations need to take mobile security more seriously.

THE PROBLEM OF PHISHING

Phishing is one of the most common ways hackers try to steal your information. Phishing is when a cybercriminal poses as a legitimate institution or individual to lure individuals and businesses to provide sensitive information. This can be done through a text claiming to be from a vendor partner, an email from a friend trying to get you to check out a photo or video, or through multiple means of communication.

The text or email may contain a malicious link or attachment that infects your computer or mobile device with malware that can steal your personal and client information.

Here are some precautionary measures:

- Don't accept text messages from numbers you don't recognize. Block them!
- Don't click on links in texts or emails, especially short ones or links that look suspicious.

CYBER RISKS — ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- What and how many devices access your network; how secure are those devices?
- Do third party organizations have access to your network; what security precautions do those organizations take to protect your network and who is contractually obligated for security and responsible for breaches?
- Do you routinely test the security of your network; are you updating and patching all programs and applications; do you have strong firewalls?
- Are you limiting spam to your network; are you limiting what sites your employees can access via your network, including what they can download?
- Are you limiting the sensitive data that you keep; are you limiting the number of people who can access your sensitive data and your network?
- Are the machines that house your network (local or cloud) secure?
- Are you routinely backing up your information separate and distinct from your servers and network?
- Are your employees adhering to best practices regarding passwords (the longer and more diverse, with numbers and symbols, the better)?
- Do you have a plan in case of breach; do you know what to do if faced with ransomware, and do you have insurance in case of a catastrophic event?
- Do you have competent cybersecurity professionals, internally or outside, who can assist you to test your system, perform audits and help in case of a breach?
- Are you training all workplace participants on preventing phishing, malware, ransomware, spam; how to prevent identity theft and social engineering scams; and how to secure passwords and mobile devices? Employee cybersecurity mistakes account for the vast majority of cyber-criminal intrusions.
- Are you providing continual education on emerging cyber risks?
- Have you purchased cyber insurance coverage?

- Don't download files unless you're expecting something from someone you trust. If it's something financial, give the person a call, just to confirm it came from them.
- Invest in virus and malware protection for your computer and mobile devices. There are many competitively priced products on the market for a year of service.
- Buy cyber liability insurance. It provides the protection and business support required to address these

dangerous and devastating attacks. Contact your insurance agent to learn more about this critical protection that may be missing from your current coverage. |



Richard Gaynor is president of Middleton & Company, an insurance agency headquartered in Newton, New Jersey.

Richard Gaynor will be part of a panel titled "Cyber Liability Exposures" at The Pool & Spa Show from January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center.

CYBER INSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS FOR COVERAGE

This template is intended as a starting point for evaluating coverage. Based on your organization's size, business sectors and the geographic locations you operate in, your needs may vary.

- ☐ Coverage for loss resulting from administrative or operational mistakes – extends to acts of the employee, business process outsourcing (BPO) or outsourced IT provider.
- ☐ Cyber extortion reimbursement costs including a credible threat to introduce malicious code; pharm and phishing customer systems; or to corrupt, damage or destroy systems.
- ☐ Electronic Media peril broadly defined to include infringement of domain name, copyright, trade names, logo, and service mark on internet or intranet site.
- ☐ Interruption expenses include costs associated with rented/leased equipment, use of third party services, staff expenses or labor costs directly resulting from a covered loss.
- ☐ Personally identifiable information (PII) broadly defined to include an individual's name in combination with social security number, driver's license number, account number, credit or debit card or any non-personal information as defined in any privacy regulation.
- ☐ Knowledge provision includes Board of Directors, President, Executive Officer, Chairman, Chief Information Officer, Chief Technology Officer, Risk Manager or General Counsel.
- ☐ Broad coverage for damages to third parties caused by a breach of network security.
- ☐ Breach of privacy coverage includes damages resulting from alleged violations of HIPAA, state and federal privacy protection laws and regulations.
- ☐ Regulatory expense coverage to comply with an alleged breach notice order issued by a regulatory agency (include both Federal and State).
- ☐ Coverage for expenses resulting from a breach of consumer protection laws including, but not limited to, the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), the California Consumer Credit Reporting Agencies Act (CCCRAA) and the EU Data Protection Act.
- ☐ Public relations expenses to repair your reputation as a result of a data breach.
- ☐ Customer breach notice expense coverage (via sub-limit) - reimburses for costs to notify and remediation costs including, but not limited to, credit monitoring.
- ☐ Coverage for rogue employee(s) causing intentional damage to the insured's network.
- ☐ Expenses including forensics, legal, remediation (credit monitoring expenses, postage and advertising) and other costs. Coverage for contractual liabilities including PCT-DSS costs.
- ☐ Breach definition extends to acts of the insured and acts of a service provider acting on behalf of the insured.
- ☐ Punitive and exemplary damages coverage provided on a most favorable venue basis.
- ☐ Business interruption coverage, including lost revenue as a result of a cyber breach.

thePOOL&SPAshow

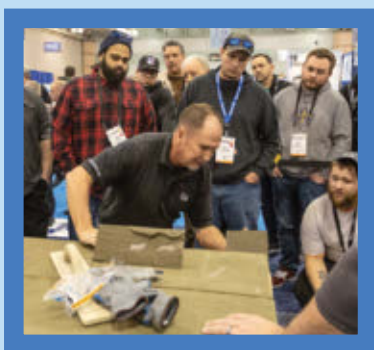
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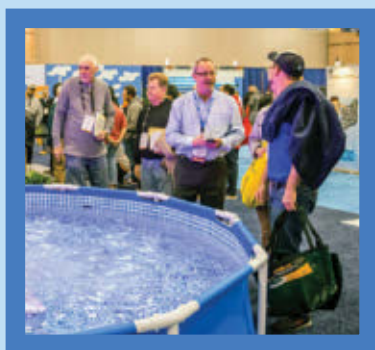
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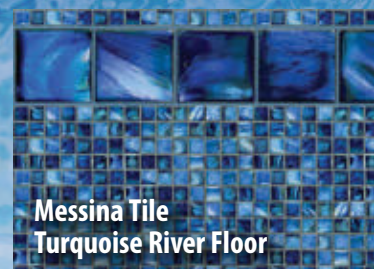
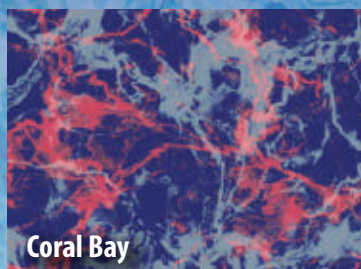
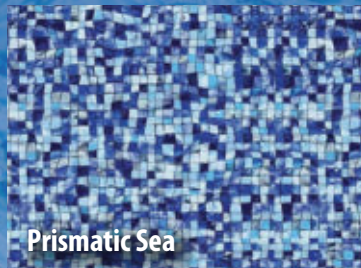
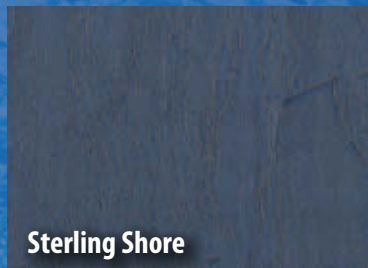
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NESPA'S 2019 OUTSTANDING

Achievement Award Winners – both the builders competition and the service companies – will be revealed for the first time at The Pool & Spa Show in Atlantic City at the Welcome Party Monday, January 27, from 7-9 p.m. at the Saloon Bar at the Wild Wild West (Bally's Casino). Grab a drink, have a bite and marvel at the way your peers combine concrete, vinyl, acrylic, steel, rock, waterfalls, light and technology into astounding, one-of-a-kind projects.

The pools, spas and water features shown on these pages are just a sampling of the Gold Medalists from NESPA's 2019 Outstanding Achievement Builders Awards Competition that will be featured at the Welcome Party. In all, a total of 191 entries were submitted to the competition, of which 83 won medals and 22 captured awards of merit.

The Outstanding Achievement Awards recognize top builders and service companies that do work in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Learn more about these awards at NESPAPool.org. Welcome Party tickets (\$20) must be purchased before entering the party. On the off-chance you miss the Welcome Party, see all of these winners at NESPA's Membership Booth throughout the show.



CUSTOM POOL WITH 6,000-LB. GROTTO TOP CANTILEVERED OVER WATER

PROJECT LOCATION: BRISTOL TOWNSHIP, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

WINNING COMPANY: CRYSTAL CLEAR SIGNATURE POOLS, LLC, SOUTHAMPTON, PENNSYLVANIA

CATEGORY: WATER FEATURES, RESIDENTIAL

The family previously lived in a condo located in Center City, Philadelphia. Their dream was to purchase a home on a body of water with enough space to build a custom pool. The end product was a free form pool with a swim-in grotto, waterfall and spa along the banks of the Delaware River in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Project Challenges: According to Crystal Clear Signature Pools, LLC, Southampton, Pennsylvania, the challenges with this project were all related to the location. The existing yard is small and the company was restricted by the property line setbacks and the flood plain line from the Delaware River. Setting the large 6,000-lb. grotto top cantilevering over the pool was a challenge due to the limited space for large equipment.

Products Used: Two Pentair IntelliFlo VSF; Pentair FNS Plus D.E. Filter, 60- sq.-ft.; Pentair Intellitouch with Screenlogic; Pentair Mastertemp 300K BTU pool and spa heater; Pentair Intellibrite 5G and Globrite LED color lights; Pentair Intellichlor Salt Water Generator; Wet Edge Signature Series Stone Pebble Plaster Tahoe finish to match the neighboring river; Custom cut natural stone coping with polished edges, tumbled bluestone pool coping, custom set natural boulder waterfalls.

TRIPLE-VESSEL PERIMETER-EDGE POOL BUILT ABOVE PARKING GARAGE

PROJECT LOCATION: MORRIS COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

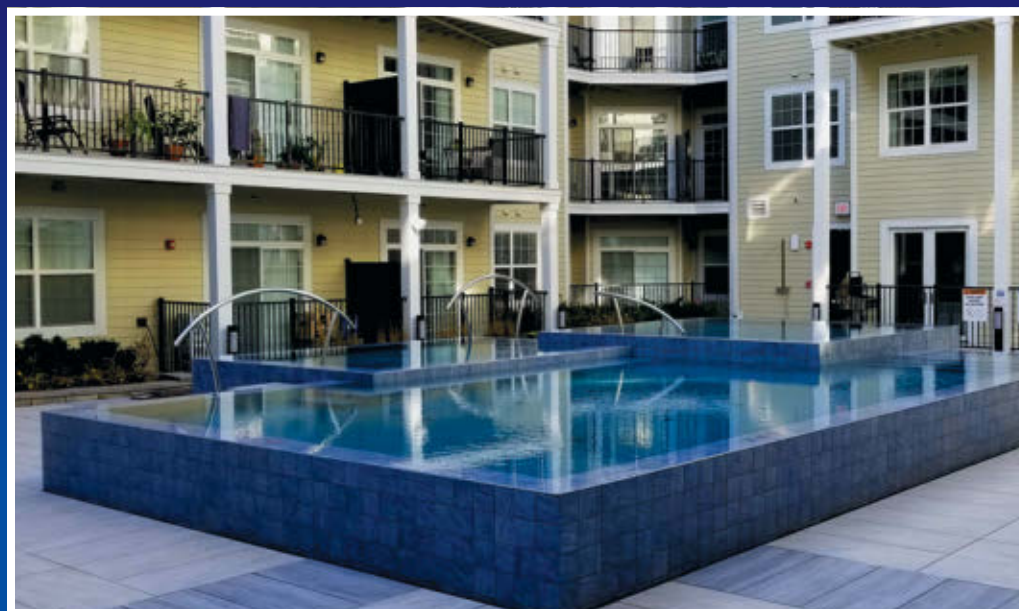
WINNING COMPANY: CREATIVE MASTER POOLS, LINCOLN PARK, INC., NEW JERSEY

CATEGORY: COMMERCIAL POOL

"This pool is a triple vessel perimeter-edge pool that is built above the parking garage of an upscale apartment building," explained Ruth Aveta, CPO, CBP, of Creative Master Pools, Inc., Lincoln Park, New Jersey. She said that since headroom below was an issue, the pool was elevated to get enough depth.

"The client required a shallow pool that allowed for some separation of swimming groups that also functioned as a feature for an entertaining space. Since this pool has full overflow on all sides, the gentle sound of water overflowing adds to the ambiance of the space for all the connected apartments to enjoy in the warm weather months. The pool deck is built on pedestals above the waterproofing membrane for the parking garage," she said.

Project Challenges: This pool is built on the 3rd level of the parking garage. Designing it high enough to get the required depth, but low enough to negate the need for a



railing around the entire perimeter took some creativity with the multiple levels. In addition, the client required that the buildings be framed before the pool was begun. Some late design changes delayed the start, so the apartments were very close to completion by the time the pool project was underway. This created an access challenge that was solved by moving the materials up to the pool area through

apartment hallways and Gunite and plaster through small 3-in. by 6-in. drain holes in the parking decks. **Products Used:** Pentair IntelliChem 2 pump chemical control system, Pentair IntelliTouch Control system, Pentair Intelliflo pumps for circulation and overflow, Pentair Eti 400 Heater, Pentair Globrite LED lights, System III filter, and Hayward UV03 Water Treatment System with UV + Ozone sanitizer.

50-FT. LAKEFRONT POOL WITH 10-FT. SPA, 25-FT. FIRE FEATURE

PROJECT LOCATION: BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WINNING COMPANY: STEELE'S SIGNATURE POOLS, TABERNACLE, NEW JERSEY

CATEGORY: POOL/SPA COMBO, CONCRETE

"The project included the construction of a luxury pool and spa at a lakefront house," according to Adam Steele, Steele's Signature Pools, Medford, New Jersey. It consisted of a 50-ft. long pool, 10-ft. spa, 25-ft. fire ledge and an 8-ft. waterfall. The pool offers a 15-ft. sun ledge with chaise loungers and a center table.

Project Challenges: The challenge with this project was constructing a pool on a hillside that was also lakefront and had limited access. The pool equipment had to be plumbed in a crawl space that had limited access and required core drilling and working in tight confines.



Products Used: Multiple Hayward Tri-Star 2 hp and 3 hp pumps; Hayward Omnilogic pool panel; Hayward

Valve Actuators; Rotron commercial spa blower; Pentair Mastertemp 400; Jandy Never Lube Valves; and Ledge Loungers.

OVERSIZED SUN LEDGE WITH GROTTO AND TALL WATERFALL

PROJECT LOCATION: DUTCHESS COUNTY, NY

WINNING COMPANY: NEAVE POOLS, WAPPINGERS FALLS, NEW YORK

CATEGORY: SAFETY COVER

This project is a residential pool with several interactive and aesthetically pleasing features, according to Scott Neave, Neave Pools, Wappingers Falls, New York. The main pool has an oversized sun ledge with three Pentair LED bubblers for lounging, a grotto with integrated bench seating and a 6-ft. waterfall over the face of the grotto, which acts as the grotto roof and jumping surface into the pool.

The lower basin, which is oversized by design, incorporates floating steps so that the infinity edge can be admired from this unique position. The upper waterfall, which is located outside the pool, spills into a small reflecting pond that then spills into the main pool area.

Project Challenges: The topography of the site, which dictated the design with over 15 feet of



elevation, was also the most challenging aspect of the construction process. Secondary to that was the amount of water in transit, which required precise calculations and construction techniques.

Products Used: Three Pentair Intelliflo Pumps; 3 Pentair LED Bubblers; 400K BTU Master Temp Heater; Pentair 520 Cartridge filter; Pentair EasyTouch with integrated SCG; 5 Pentair Glo-Brite Color LED 12V pool lights.

MASSIVE OVERFLOW PERIMETER POOL & GLASS-TILED SPA FEATURES ROCKS RETRIEVED FROM ROADS AND RUINS ALL OVER EUROPE

PROJECT LOCATION: BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WINNING COMPANY: TRANQUILITY POOLS, LLC, HASKELL, NEW JERSEY

CATEGORY: SPECIALTY POOLS, PERIMETER OVERFLOW (WET EDGE)

"Our firm was tasked with designing and building a unique one-of-a-kind residential landscape plan," said Brian Parks, Tranquility Pools, LLC, Haskell, New Jersey. "It was unlike anything else we had ever seen. Everything on this property was custom built. From a massive overflow perimeter swimming pool, to a fully glass-tiled spa, to a spacious patio, multiple gardens and water fountains, every inch of this beautiful estate was carefully curated, designed and executed. All the stones that we installed on this property were reclaimed from roads and ruins all over Europe. It took a collaborative effort from our team of architects and designers, as well as the homeowners, to bring the entire vision to life."



Project Challenges: Creating a 2,000 square foot, 360-degree perimeter overflow pool presented many challenges. Installing and properly placing the underwater fiber optic lights to look like stars was a difficult production, as was making sure the water flow was even all

the way around the pool to maintain an even and proper overflow level.

Products Used: SR Smith Fiber optic star lights; two 500,000 BTU heaters; hand laid glass tiles; sourced custom glass 7/8-in. x 7/8-in.; underwater speakers; and Pentair deck jets.



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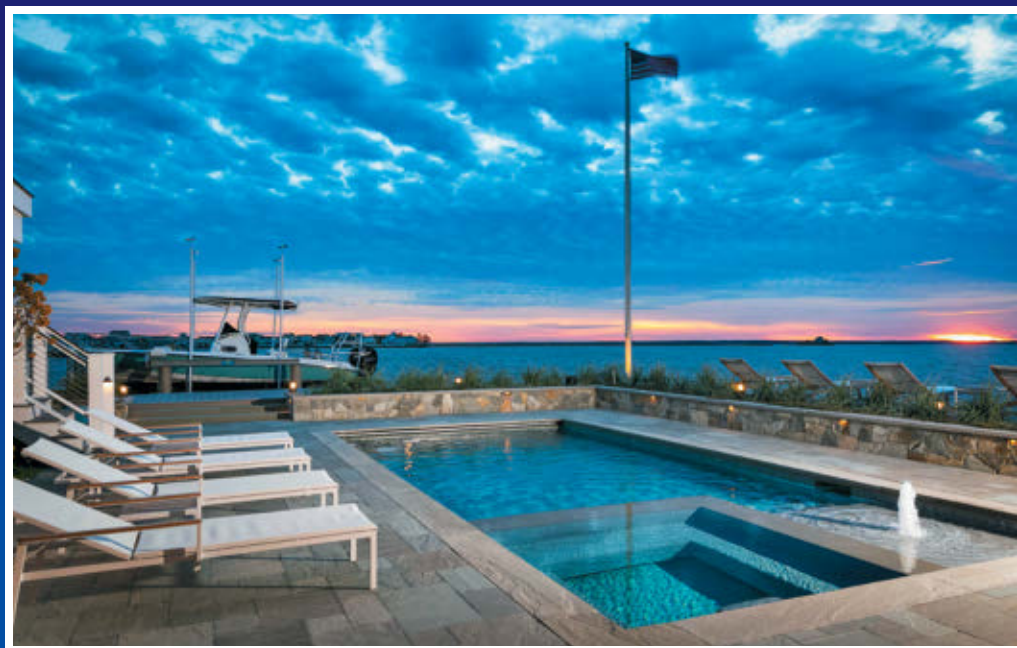
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BAYFRONT POOL & SPA COMBO

PROJECT LOCATION: NORMANDY BEACH, OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WINNING COMPANY: SPECIALIZED POOLS, INC., BRICK, NEW JERSEY
CATEGORY: POOL/SPA COMBO, CONCRETE

"This bayfront project was designed and built to be the versatile, summer-home addition that our clients always dreamed of. We worked hand-in-hand with our clients on each detail of the project as their 14-ft. by 28-ft. pool and 7-ft. by 7-ft. spa were being built in concert with their new waterfront home," said Alexa Kniffin of Specialized Pools, Inc., Brick, New Jersey. Beneath its shell, this project includes 18 wood pilings and 4-in. plumbing circulating back to an intelligent, energy-efficient equipment pad.

"The pool includes benches with hydrotherapy jets along the north and east walls for panoramic sunset views, while the spa implements a unique toe-kick design that not only hides the main drain covers, but also gives cover to 30 ¼-in. air nozzles to oxygenate and enhance the hydrotherapy experience," Kniffin explained.



Project Challenges: "The location of the project at the tip of a peninsula presented some challenges throughout the build," said Kniffin. "We dealt with harsh weather conditions and site-flooding, and the roads to the project were often flooded."

Products Used: Pentair equipment platform, which includes three IntelliFlo pumps, an IntelliTouch

automation system synced with the home's Control 4 system, 5 LED white/color Globrite lights, Screenlogic phone control, cartridge filtration and natural gas heat. Additionally, the project includes a Cover Pools automatic cover, 9-ft. glass waterline tile from Lunada Bay, and a PebbleSheen finish from Pebble Technology.

60-FT. POOL & SPA THAT LITERALLY HAS EVERYTHING

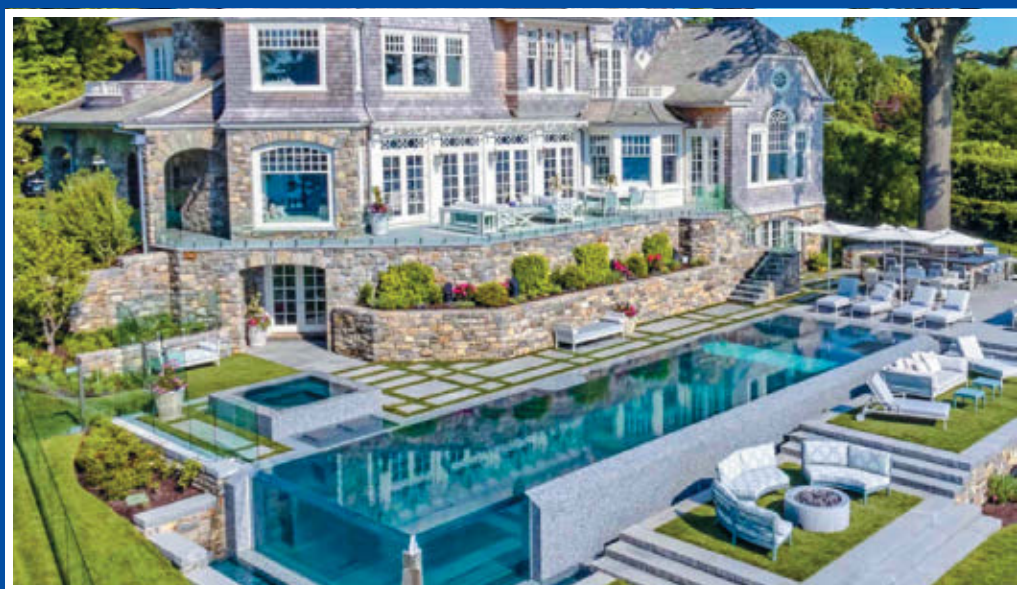
PRODUCT LOCATION: LONG ISLAND SOUND COAST IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT.

WINNING COMPANY: DRAKELEY POOL COMPANY, LLC

CATEGORY: EXCEPTIONAL RECOGNITION IN DESIGN & BUILDING, CONCRETE

"I may have oversold this project," quipped William Drakeley, Drakeley Pool Company, LLC, Bethlehem, Connecticut. "I met with the customer, who wanted a new pool for his home at the edge of Long Island Sound. He asked 'What's cool in residential pools today?' I responded: the vanishing edge is cool, perimeter overflow spas, swim ledges, automatic covers that come up through the floor, all-glass tile and acrylic panels as sidewalls. 'Okay,' said the customer, 'let's do it.'"

What resulted was a 60-ft. pool with perimeter overflow vanishing edge, 7-ft. spa with perimeter overflow. The sidewalls of the pool facing Long Island Sound are 6-ft. 10-in. acrylic panels 7-1/2-in. thick. The equipment vault is constructed under



the pool. There are 20 tons of steel throughout the project, and it took five days to shoot concrete.

Project Challenges: Drakeley has been building highly complex pools for decades, so few things challenge the company. This pool, however, was a real challenge: the acrylic panels were originally designed as one piece, but the acrylic

wall manufacturer had previous failures in the Northeastern climate with the temperature differential. Drakeley had to engineer and install a stainless steel mullion for the wall, but in doing so he had to accurately calculate the thermal expansion of steel, acrylic and concrete all tied together as the temperatures changed.



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1,250-ST.-FT. POOL INCLUDES 12-PERSON SPA AND 5 WATERFALLS

PROJECT LOCATION: WESTCHESTER
COUNTY, NEW YORK

WINNING COMPANY: CIPRIANO
LANDSCAPE DESIGN, MAHWAH, NEW
JERSEY

CATEGORY: SPECIALTY POOLS,
NATURAL

"This project showcases a magnificent backyard attraction that features some of the most unique luxury pool amenities imaginable," explained Valerie Wegrzynowicz of Cipriano Landscape Design, Mahwah, New Jersey. The 1,250-sq.-ft. swimming pool includes a 12-person spa, low-voltage colored lighting, iridescent glass tile finishes and five waterfalls. The grotto structure beyond the pool mixes natural and artificial stone to form a mountainous backdrop. The waterfalls, which move 2,500 gallons of water per minute into the swimming pool, conceal a fully furnished dry interior grotto and swim-up bar.

Project Challenges: The entire pool interior is finished with more than 500,000 individual glass tile pieces, a custom gradient blend of translucent glass



tile transitions up the shallow end of the pool to give the feel of a wave washing ashore. Another of the more challenging aspects of this job was creating the 10-foot-high waterfall/grotto structure in a flat backyard while maintaining the natural style of the

design. The designer/builder used natural stone and realistic faux stone for a natural appearance. **Products Used:** Oceanside Glasstile; Speck Waterfall Pumps; Dolphin – Custom 45-ft. enclosed tube slide; Pentair operating system and equipment.

GUNITE FREE-FORM POOL OFFERS SHEER DESCENT, SIX LAMINARS AND VANISHING EDGE

PROJECT LOCATION: KATONAH, NEW
YORK, WESTCHESTER COUNTY

WINNING COMPANY: CORAL SEA
POOLS, BRIARCLIFF MANOR, NEW
YORK

CATEGORY: POOL/SPA COMBINATION,
CONCRETE

A 1,200-sq.-ft. Gunite, free form pool and spa combo, this project's additional features include a sheer descent, six laminars and a vanishing edge. **Project Challenges:** According to Coral Sea Pools, Briarcliff Manor, New York, the first challenge on this site was hitting rock on the first day of digging; it took three days to chop it out. The second was the pool radius: the architect did not detail the radius dimensions on his plan. The third challenge was getting the entire pool, spa and vanishing-edge tank shot in one day.

Products Used: Jandy variable speed pumps; Jandy nichless LED lights; Jandy RS & iAqualink; Jandy cartridge filter; Jandy pool heater.



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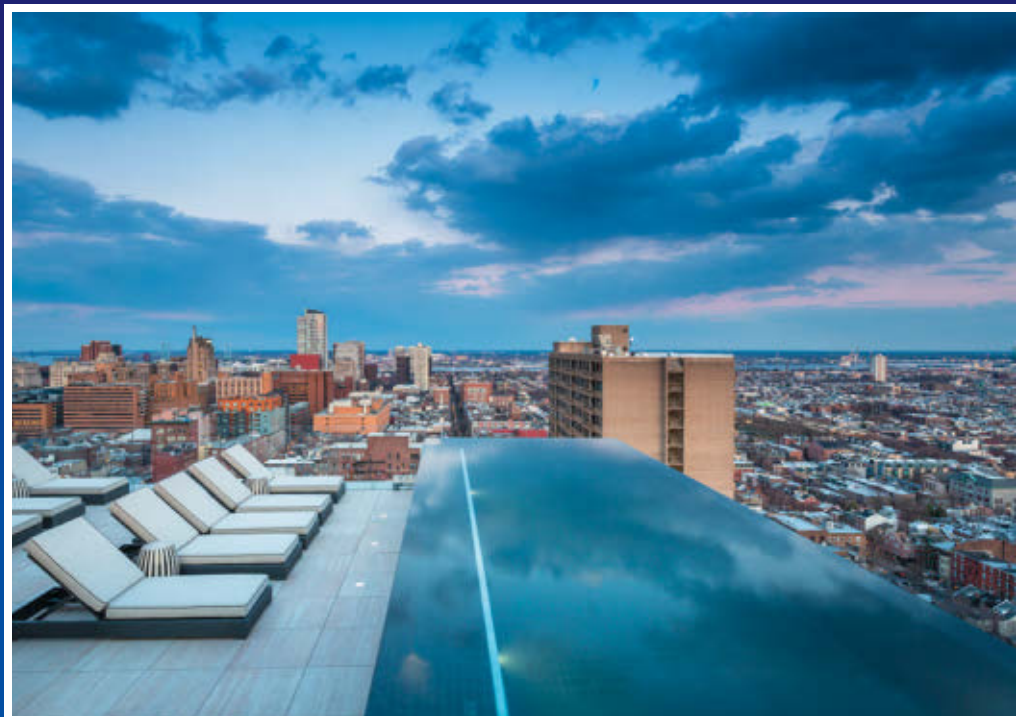
ELEGANT WATERFALL EDGE POOL ON 22ND FLOOR OF HISTORIC BUILDING

PROJECT LOCATION: PHILADELPHIA,
PENNSYLVANIA

WINNING COMPANY: BENNINGTON
POOL SERVICE, KING OF PRUSSIA,
PENNSYLVANIA

CATEGORY: EXCEPTIONAL
RECOGNITION IN DESIGN AND
BUILDING COMPETITION, CONCRETE

This elegant waterfall-edge pool is located on the 22nd floor of a historic building recently restored to luxury residences by Post Brothers. Post Brothers and Diamond Spas played important roles in this project, according to Matthew McMaster of Bennington Pool Service, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. McMaster said that the oversized spa size sits next to the 360-degree infinity edge lounge pool and both are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The pool is surrounded by travertine, nero marquina marble, all tied together by 100-year-old white terracotta set against a stunning unobstructed backdrop – the Philadelphia skyline. Project Challenges: The goal was to make sure the experience for the residents was the same summer



or winter. So designing the pool and spa to operate outside, on a rooftop, year around, was the challenge. Products Used: Stainless Steel Pool by Diamond Spas;

Clear Comfort Sanitizers; Jandy Levolor Autofill Systems; Jandy LED lights; Pentair Heaters (Eti 400), Intelliflo VSP, Clean & Clear Plus filters.

GUNITE BEACH ENTRY COMBINED WITH LINER POOL

PROJECT LOCATION: ROCKAWAY,
NEW JERSEY

WINNING COMPANY: BLU SOL POOLS,
BLOOMINGDALE, NEW JERSEY

CATEGORY: RESIDENTIAL CONCRETE
POOLS FREEFORM

“Our client wanted the simplicity of a liner pool; however, he had three large dogs that loved swimming,” said Greg Imhoff, Blue Sol Pools, Bloomington, New Jersey. “We decided to design and incorporate a custom Gunite beach entry that tied into their lagoon liner pool to allow the dogs to access the pool without ripping the liner.” Two massive waterfalls are set around the pool: the large one salt water flowing into the pool; the other fresh water flowing into a separate dry pond to allow for aquatic plants. Project Challenges: “We had to carefully marry the liner track to the Gunite beach entry by making it not only functional, but aesthetically pleasing as well” said Imhoff. Products Used: Pentair Clean and Clear 520, Pentair Superflo 1.5 hp, Pentair Intellichlor, Mastertemp 400 BTU heater, Easy Touch Automation System with Screenlogic. |





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Pool Contaminants: Phosphates, Metals & Organic Waste

by Chris Marcano

AS WINTER COMES to an end, pool professionals will be faced with a variety of pool water cleanup challenges. Brave service technicians removing pool covers need to recall how to clean cloudy, swampy pool water and how to keep it clear all summer long. In order to be prepared for these water clarification challenges, it's important to remember that phosphates, metals and organic waste are the three main contaminants that cause havoc in pool water. Identifying the sources of these contaminants can help pool professionals keep pool water clear.

CONTAMINANT #1: PHOSPHATES

In our industry we hear the word phosphate on a regular basis. But it's important to be reminded exactly what

phosphates are and why they are a pool water contaminant. Phosphates are biological building blocks that are formed when phosphoric acid comes in contact with certain metals. It is important to understand that phosphates exist in many different forms. Most of these come from natural sources such as rivers, lakes and oceans or mined rock. (The United States is one of the largest producers of phosphate rock.) Phosphate is termed a "pollutant" or "contaminant" and is primarily used in soaps, detergents, shampoos and even soda pop. Other phosphate sources include fertilizers, organic debris such as leaves and bark, and some pool chemicals. What we find is that phosphates are one of the primary contaminants in pool water and can cause headaches for service techs trying to clarify pool water.

As an industry, we have learned that phosphate removal has proven to be helpful in solving pool water problems. However, anyone who has dealt with pool maintenance for a while can attest to the fact that there is no "magic pill" in the quest to maintain crystal clear pool water. It takes conscientious work and a regimen that includes proper pool-water balancing, correct sanitizer levels and regular doses of shock. Maintaining phosphate levels below 125ppb can help reduce potential pool problems.

Remember, when it comes to swimming pools, we are only concerned with the orthophosphate form of phosphate. When testing pools for the presence of phosphates, use a test kit made specifically for free orthophosphate.

There are several issues that may be caused by high-phosphates: cloudy

water, increased time and effort to care for the pool water, and calcium phosphate scale formation on heaters and salt cells. Before you start testing for phosphates, however, here are tips to ensure accurate readings:

- No algae present. An accurate reading of phosphates cannot be obtained with live algae in the pool.
- Chlorine level is below 5ppm. A high chlorine reading could bleach out the test results, rendering them inaccurate.
- High-range testing. In some cases, phosphate levels may be so high that a dilution test is necessary. If the regular test maxes out, re-test using the following solution: fill ½ of the test vial with distilled or bottled water (zero-phosphates) and then fill the other ½ of the vial with pool water. Do the test as usual and multiply the results by two for your high range phosphate reading.

In many cases, high levels of phosphates can cause calcium phosphate scale, which forms when phosphates in the water fuse together with calcium. The carbonate often falls out of solution and can feel 'gritty' to the touch. It also tends to build up on salt generator cells and heat exchangers. When it comes to calcium phosphate scale, prevention is the best approach. If you already have calcium phosphate scale, remove it first, then do a phosphate treatment to reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence. While we are continuing to learn more every day about phosphate removal, the benefits of its removal have been soundly proven in both the laboratory and the field. Phosphate removers efficiently help to remove this contaminant from the pool. Some removers even work on the filter where it can be backwashed out, while most need to be vacuumed from the floor of the pool when they fall out of solution.

CONTAMINANT #2 – METALS

While some contaminants are inadvertently added to pool water, in many

cases, the water itself can be filled with contaminants, namely metals. Source water often contains high levels of iron and copper, the most common metals that cause pool problems. These hidden metal ions can cause discoloration of the water and stains on the pool surface.

Iron can cause staining and give water a brownish tint. It can make its way into pool water in a number of ways. While lawn care professionals sometimes inadvertently introduce iron into the pool via fertilizers, well water is the most common way iron gets introduced into the pool. If the source water is well water, there can also be iron bacteria present, small organisms that occur in soil, shallow groundwater and surface waters. It is a good idea to start a weekly maintenance program using a sequestering agent.

Copper is another common metal contaminant introduced into pool water from more basic algaecides, heat exchangers and even old copper plumbing. One of the most common mistakes made when diagnosing problem water is mistaking 'copper green' for 'algae green.' Consumers often come into the pool store saying their water is green and your store staff may immediately sell the consumer a copper algaecide to remove 'algae.' This, unfortunately, could lead to making the green water problem even worse. When green water problems are reported, it is important to ask the customer if the pool water is cloudy and green or clear and green. If the water is clear, but has a greenish cast, this is a sure sign of copper in the water and a good sequesterant will work to clear the copper green into the filter. If the green water is from algae, then the water will also appear cloudy and the walls and floor will be slimy to the touch.

If there are metals in the water, adding a sequestering agent is key, as metals can cause staining while you are

correcting the water chemistry. A lot of staining in pools is caused by the pH dropping and aggressively dissolving the metals into solution, so an ounce of prevention goes a long way.

CONTAMINANT #3- ORGANIC WASTE

Reports on the amount of non-living waste left behind by bathers are quite shocking. It is a commonly accepted standard in the pool and hot tub industry that each bather leaves behind approximately 16 oz. of non-living waste in a body of water after a 45 to 60 minute swim. These unwanted contaminants come from lotions, sunscreens, make-up, hair products, pollen, bird waste, even jet fuel dropped by planes landing near your client's neighborhood. The best way to solve the problems associated with non-living organic waste is to add enzymes to the pool on every service visit to help break down these contaminants in the water so the filter doesn't need to work as hard.

When using an enzyme maintenance product weekly, pool professionals can actually take it one step further by splitting the dose up to daily feed amounts (this works well in commercial pools). Enzymes work even while bathers are swimming, so think of it like cleaning up in the midst of a party. As non-living organics are being added to the water via bathers, enzymes can be continuously breaking them down rather than waiting for them to build up and cause filter problems, water clarity issues or scum rings along the waterline. For best results, enzymes should be added when chlorine levels are below 5ppm.

Enzymes are particularly effective in large outdoor commercial pools that are filled with the bather waste, body oils and sunscreen from bathers, in addition to being exposed to a lot of environmental waste. The patrons of these pools always comment how the water feels nicer when it has been treated with enzymes.

Facility managers may be apprehensive at first because of the cost of using enzymes, but many quickly change their minds and find room in their budgets after they see how the filters work more efficiently, unpleasant odors disappear and the water clarity improves.

CONCLUSION

By incorporating enzymes and phosphate removal into pool maintenance, service techs are essentially

automating the removal of many unwanted contaminants from pool water. Once service techs can identify the most common pool water contaminants, it will be much easier to remove them, keeping pool water clear and clean all season long. ■



Chris Marciano is director of training and education for NC Brands and an APSP Fellow.

Chris Marciano will present a seminar on this topic at The Pool & Spa Show from January 28-30, 2020, Atlantic City Convention Center. Visit www.ThePoolSpaShow.com for the latest information.



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by John Watt



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OVER THE PAST few years, aquatic professionals have learned that the fastest way to lower energy consumption is to reduce energy use in the pool pump room. Pumps use a vast amount of electricity. To reduce costs associated with water circulation and filtration, VFDs, or Variable Frequency Drives, can be added to the pump room to immediately lower the energy consumed by the equipment.

A VFD is designed specifically to help aquatic facilities save energy and operating costs by increasing pump performance, saving up to 60 percent or more on the pump's electricity usage. The VFD allows the system to ramp up to full speed during the day as the pool reaches peak bather loads. At night, the drive can slow the pump down to continue filtration, but not at full speed while the pool is closed.

MAXIMIZE PUMP PERFORMANCE TO REDUCE ELECTRICITY USAGE

VFDs allow the pool pumps to run at their most efficient point on the electrical curve. The VFD allows for better control of the pump itself by dialing the pump to the exact flow rate needed rather than using butterfly valves to bring the pump to the GPM needed.

Installing a VFD on a pool pump can save an aquatic facility as much as 5-10 percent in energy costs by simply dialing in the pump where it actually needs to be. A variable frequency drive will essentially “right-size” the pump to the exact flow required and in doing so will use less energy by providing a constant flow as the filter gets dirty (using an optional flow sensor). The VFD offers “off-hour” flow management capability and adjusts drive input voltage for the best efficiency point – so pumps become 98 percent efficient.

INCREASE PUMP MOTOR LIFE

One of the key features of the VFD is its ability to ‘clean up’ the power going to the pump. By doing so, the pump receives a constant, solid flow of power and voltage to the motor, which helps lengthen the life of that motor. Pump motors last longer because of the overload trip protection that protects motor and drive from voltage spikes and phase unbalance. Perhaps more important, a VFD can allow for a ramp-up start of the motor that makes life easier on the motor and also eliminates the potential water hammering effect on the plumbing systems.

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VFDS EXTEND PUMP MOTOR LIFE

- Eliminates need for motor starters;
- Adjustable ramp up and down duration eliminates water hammering and prolongs equipment life;
- Overload trip protection protects motor and drive from voltage spikes and phase imbalance.

For larger horsepower pumps (5HP and higher), variable frequency drives offer a significant return on investment, especially for commercial aquatic facilities. The greatest long-term benefit of the VFD is that it helps to lengthen the life of the pump motor so the maintenance and motor replacement is significantly decreased. Preventive maintenance costs drop because of motor protection, motor soft start and protection of the pump's shaft and impeller. Installing a VFD not only saves you on energy usage costs, but also keeps motors working better, longer, so motor replacement is far less frequent.

REDUCE OPERATING COSTS

In order to quantitatively work on reducing the operating costs associated with running the pump room, you must start by determining exactly what it costs to run your system. In order to do this, first determine the GPM and TDH of the pump, how long each day the pump runs and the cost per kilowatt hour your power company is charging. Once you have a clear dollar figure to tackle, you will be able to easily determine the payback of adding a VFD.

CHOOSING A VFD

Choosing a VFD is very easy. All you need to know is the phase going to the pump – single or three; the horsepower of the pump onto which you are installing the VFD; and whether the drive will be installed indoors and outdoors. You see the greatest potential for savings when using a VFD with Class F motor insulation. Be sure to check this

VARIABLE FREQUENCY DRIVES

Do the following:

- "Right-size" your pump to the exact flow required;
- Save energy with constant flow as the filter gets dirty (with optional flow sensor);
- Offer "off-hour" flow management capability;
- High efficiency up to 98 percent - adjusts drive input voltage for best efficiency point;
- Eliminate need for motor starters;
- Adjustable ramp up and down duration eliminates water hammering and prolongs equipment life;
- Overload trip protection protects motor and drive from voltage spikes and phase imbalance;
- Save up to 60 percent or more on pump's electricity usage.

10 STEPS TO HELP REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION/ PUMP ROOM OPERATING COSTS

1. Replace pool pump with an energy-efficient unit.
2. Consider a variable speed pump (VSP). VSPs with permanent magnet motors and digital controls can save up to 90 percent in utility costs compared to one- or two-speed pumps with induction motors.
3. If using an energy-efficient one- or two-speed pump, make sure it is sized to the pool's requirements.
4. Reduce run time or speed to lower energy use.
5. If using a one-speed pump, reduce filtration run time. In general, water needs to be circulated through the filter once every six hours for most commercial applications.
6. If using a two-speed or VSP, use the lowest speed to appropriately circulate the water. Reducing speed saves more energy than reducing run time.
7. Install a variable frequency drive (VFD) to run pumps efficiently.
8. Run the pool's filtration system during off-peak hours when electricity demand is lower (generally between 8 p.m. and 10 a.m.). Install a timer or control system to automate hours of operation.
9. Keep intake grates clear of debris. Clogged drains require the pump to work harder.
10. To obtain maximum filtration and energy efficiency, backwash or clean the filter regularly as required.

on existing motors. If they are class B, for example, the drive can still be used, but additional software may need to be added depending on the incoming voltage.

INSTALLING THE VFD

As long as you know wiring and power, most pool professionals can easily install the VFD. The incoming power from the power source basically gets wired to the incoming side of the VFD and then the pump motor gets wired to the outgoing part of the VFD. One thing to always remember is that VFDs require the use of a three-phase motor. So if you have single-phase power coming to the drive, the VFD acts as a phase converter and wires to a three-phase motor.

EQUIPMENT COSTS VS. ENERGY SAVINGS

Even with the advantages explained, some facility operators still find the cost of a VSP or VFD hard to justify. However, before ruling one out, the price of a new pump should be compared to the expense of doing nothing. For example, an aquatic facility using a single-speed pump may have operational costs of up to \$900 per year. After five years, the facility will have spent \$4,500 to operate the pump. However, comparable operational costs for a

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facility with a well-designed circulation system that uses a VSP or VFD may be as little as \$200 per year. During the same five-year period, it would cost the facility less than a quarter the amount it would have spent using a single-speed pump. Cost savings will continue to multiply the longer the VSP or VFD is used. (Costs and savings will vary by region.) The initial cost of a VSP or VFD can typically be recouped during the second year of operation, especially in pools that operate year-round.

The VFD units have a minimal payback time as they automatically optimize energy. Most VFD units offer a built-in display to show you how much time remains until your drive pays for itself. Plus the VFD eliminates the need for a motor starter, which, purchased separately, would cost \$500-\$750. Many utility providers around the country even offer rebates to those that install a variable frequency drive, making the investment in the drive minimal.

Looking at the pump room as a whole can drastically help facility managers reduce their operating costs. Technology advancements in today's pool pump room will ensure that the pool in your athletic club is achieving the water quality, reporting, and cost controls necessary to keep the pools running as smoothly and efficiently as possible, minimizing their impact on the environment.

SAVING 50 PERCENT

With the substantial energy-use rebates that some local power companies offer, in conjunction with the savings

in daily operational expenses, some end-users are getting back approximately 50 percent of the pump's cost in less than a year when they add a variable frequency drive and upgrade their pumps. Variable speed pumps are self-priming, highly energy efficient pumps. A variable speed pump or a VFD will immediately lower the pump room's monthly energy bills. |



John Watt has spent the last 25 years working for Pentair in a variety of positions including field service technician, regional service manager, national trainer and product specialist. He currently works for Pentair's application engineering and new product development for the USA, Latin America and Canada.

John Watt and Mike Fowler, Pentair, will present a session titled "Maximizing Energy Efficiency Pump Rooms with Variable Frequency Drives" at The Pool & Spa Show in Atlantic City January 28-30, 2020. Check out all show seminars at www.thepoolspashow.com.

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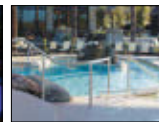
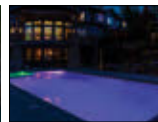
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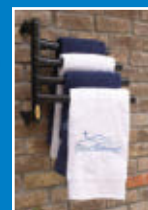
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Lo-Chlor25
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CLEANING PRODUCTS

Camco28
www.camco.net

CONCRETE FORMS

Frank Wall Enterprises53, 54
www.frankwall.com

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Concrete Countertop Solutions18
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COVERS/LINERS

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East Coast Salt37

POOL TOOLS

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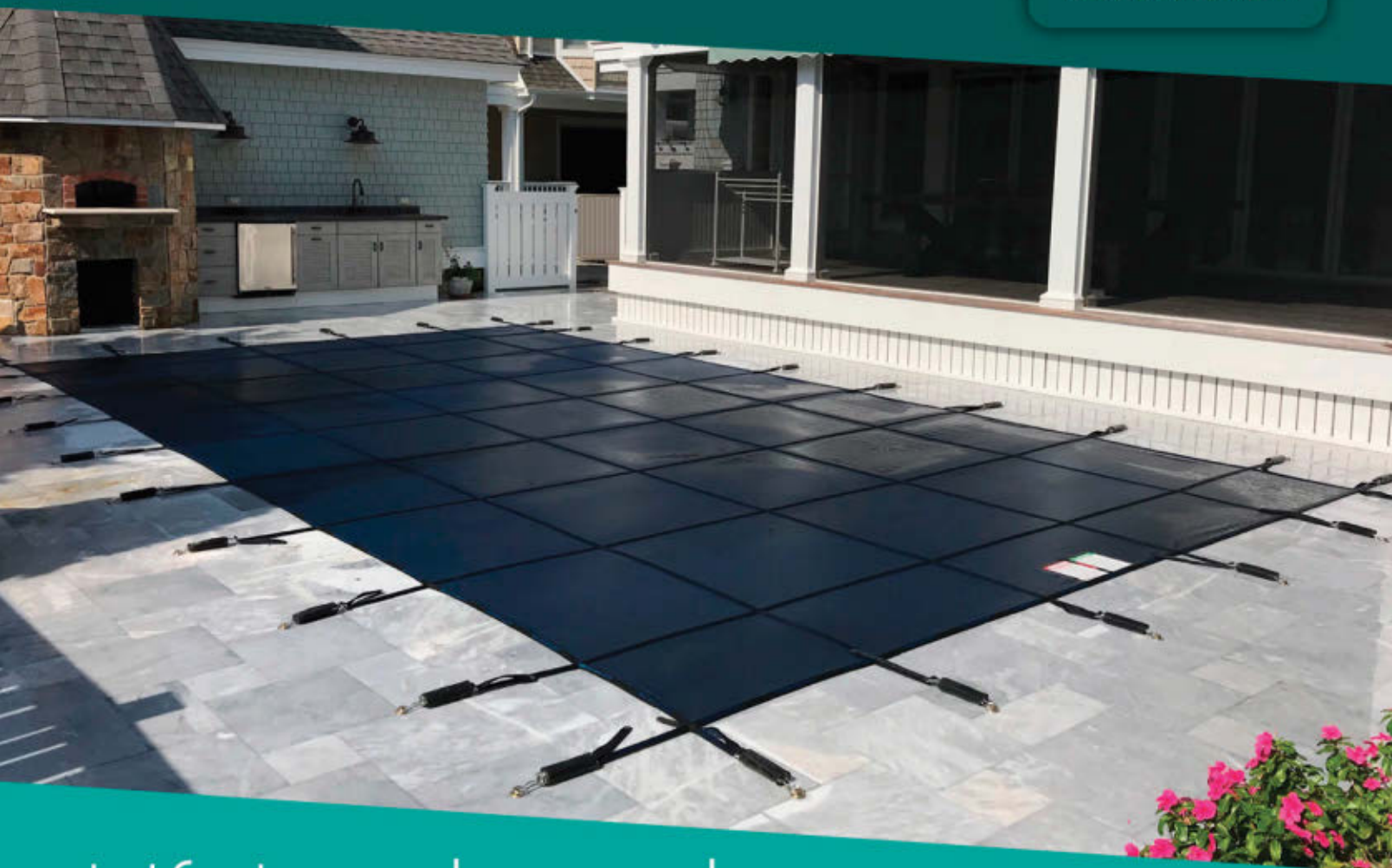
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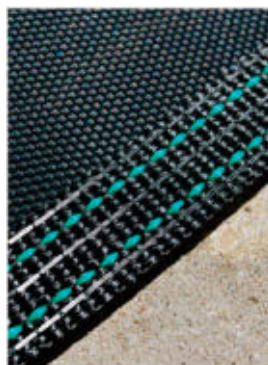
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