Old School is No School by Chris Hall

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Bridgehampton - Real Estate professionals continue learning their craft well beyond their first years in the business. Brokers keep up with the latest changes in zoning, mortgage rates, comps, and market trends. Imagine if you represented a client who was buying a home and quoted information from 1995? Believe it or not, many swimming pool builders operate this way. The old school builder operates this way. While it is a challenge to find an experienced professional who has kept up on the many advances in the industry; doing so is time well spent.

When you are choosing a swimming pool builder, or advising your client, ask about certifications. Ask about continuing education. Ask what the pool professional did last winter.

Winter, the off season for many pool builders, can be a very busy time of year for the best of the best. This off season there were at least three trade shows of interest. Before you jump to any conclusions about a fun in the sun getaway; Atlantic City and Chicago play host to two of the top shows (Vegas is the other one). Honing your craft in 2012 is a necessary component to compete in the high end market. A brief explanation below of this year's shows will provide a taste of where the top pool professionals spent this winter.

Since 1975, World of Concrete has been the industry's only annual international event dedicated to the commercial concrete and masonry construction industries. The show featured indoor and outdoor exhibits, leading suppliers showcasing innovative products and technologies, demonstrations and competitions, a world-class education program, and the information needed to stay competitive.

Chicago played host to the Mid America Pool and Spa Show. The Mid America Show began in 1985 and continues to be the largest event of its kind in the Midwest. The show offers pool professionals the opportunity to learn about new products and services, network one on one with industry suppliers, and receive industry leading education programs tailored to business owners, managers and service technicians.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the Northeast Swimming Pool Association (the forerunner of the Northeast Spa & Pool Association) held various seminars and tabletop trade shows as a member benefit in New York. The Atlantic City Pool & Spa Show is a four day conference and exhibit event where the industry meets with and does business with over 500 exhibitors and over 10,000 attendees yearly. Industry professionals from all over the country attend the show to see all the latest pool and spa trends, cutting-edge design and product technology and to attend over 75 educational seminars.

The educational seminars at each trade show build upon knowledge and certifications that come with years of study. Although the subject matter might not be as fascinating to you as it is to swimming pool veterans, it can be appreciated by all as a requirement when considering an investment as large as a luxury gunite pool.

After all is said and done, you may say to your new pool builder "I know what you did last winter." And, if you do, you can rest easy knowing that you have made the right choice.

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Chris Hall - About Author:
Chris Hall began his career in the swimming pool industry over 30 years ago. He is currently a consultant to Casual Water; the premiere swimming pool construction and service company in the Hamptons. a Casual Water has locations in Bridgehampton and Southampton. To learn more about Casual Water and the importance of choosing the best gunite swimming pool construction, please contact Chris at chris@casualwater.com and 1-631-537-5475

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