

Pool and Spa Industry WINS GOLD

I would be willing to bet that it is not an easy task to find someone in this country who is unaware that the Olympics recently concluded in Beijing. My guess is that it is probably hard to find a person who has not heard the name of the swimmer Michael Phelps and what he has done, at least as far as the most gold medals by any Olympian and the seven world records. However, what you may not realize is the awareness and boost that Phelps has given to the pool and spa industry.

To many, Michael Phelps has become an American hero, and children like to dream about being a hero. Think back to your youth. How many of you have fond memories of playing sandlot baseball, dreaming of being the next Joe DiMaggio? Not to crush the fond memories, but how many of you remember having to buy your children a basketball hoop to put up in the driveway so they could be Michael Jordan? The truth is, the interest in swimming may have been sparked by the in-pool accomplishments of Phelps and the other U.S. swimmers.

In addition, after the Olympics, Phelps started the Michael Phelps Swimming Foundation with the purpose of getting children interested in the sport of swimming, which will no doubt pay dividends for the industry. Anyone who doesn't know about Michael Phelps certainly knows about the state of the economy, especially the high cost of traveling. People are staying home as opposed to traveling for their vacations. This has become so popular that the term "stay-cation" has been coined and used almost as much as the actual word vacation. The question is this: "How are you going to take advantage of these opportunities?"

The quickest way for us to take advantage of this is to start out by educating ourselves on all of the latest products, trends and industry happenings at the Atlantic City Pool and Spa Show, which will be held in that city by the ocean January 27-29, 2009. Where else can you go in the Northeast where every

ATLANTIC CITY POOL & SPA SHOW | by Greg Bailey



major manufacturer is displaying and selling their latest products, and at the same time learn about practically every issue that may arise when running a pool and spa business? And the best part is that it's entirely free! The exhibit area has free admission for everyone in the industry, and Northeast Spa and Pool Association (NESPA) members and their employees can attend, free of charge, every technical seminar they wish. With more than 70 seminars this year, that may be the only problem.

Michael Phelps did not simply wake up and become a great swimmer. High profile athletes train from the time they are beginning their sport until the day they retire. In order to be the best at what you do or, honestly, in order to even be good at it, you must train. That's exactly how the Atlantic City Pool and Spa Show will benefit you. We feature seminars for professionals at every level of competency—beginner, intermediate and advanced.

But even with all the positives in the industry right now, we cannot forget our task at hand, and that is to sell, build and service safe pools and spas. Recent news has focused on pool and spa safety, specifically with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act set to take effect on December 20, 2008. Other state and local codes can be quite confusing. At the expo you'll find an all-day forum on Monday solely dedicated to helping you understand codes. Our suggestion to you is to attend this class and ask as many questions as you can possibly think of.

The Atlantic City Pool and Spa Show is a great way to kick off your season. We promise that attending the show and taking advantage of the exhibits, seminars, networking opportunities and everything else the show has to offer will be better prepare you to handle the industry—hopefully as well as Michael Phelps wins gold medals. |

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