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Amphibious Installation





Photos this page courtesy Brett Lloyd Abbott

HOW TO 10X YOUR RENOVATIONS REVENUE

YOU MAY RECALL MY recent suggestion that any pool builder who is struggling to find new pool leads should consider pivoting over to renovations. That's because No. 1: In parts of the United States, the new pool lead flow is declining, leaving pool builders fighting over scraps. And No. 2: For every new pool that is built in 2023, there will be at least 10 existing pools that need a renovation.

So presuming you're on board with the idea of selling more renovations, I'd like to offer some suggestions of how you can get more revenue for every new renovation job you do.

It starts with these simple magic words...

“HOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING THIS SPACE?”

Let me share with you a real-life example from about 10 years ago. One

of my favorite clients — I'll call him ABC — received a repair request from a homeowner saying, “Our pool has a leak. Can you give us a quote to fix it?”

ABC promptly sent out their top renovations guy (who happened to be the owner of the company) to prepare the bid.

When my client arrived, the homeowner walked him to the big 40,000 gallon rectangle pool that looked like it was built in the mid 70s. Classic red brick coping, and a huge deep end to accommodate the diving board. The whole thing was surrounded by a fabric safety fence, which might be a common sight in some places, but was extremely rare in Texas.

When ABC asked about the fence, the homeowner

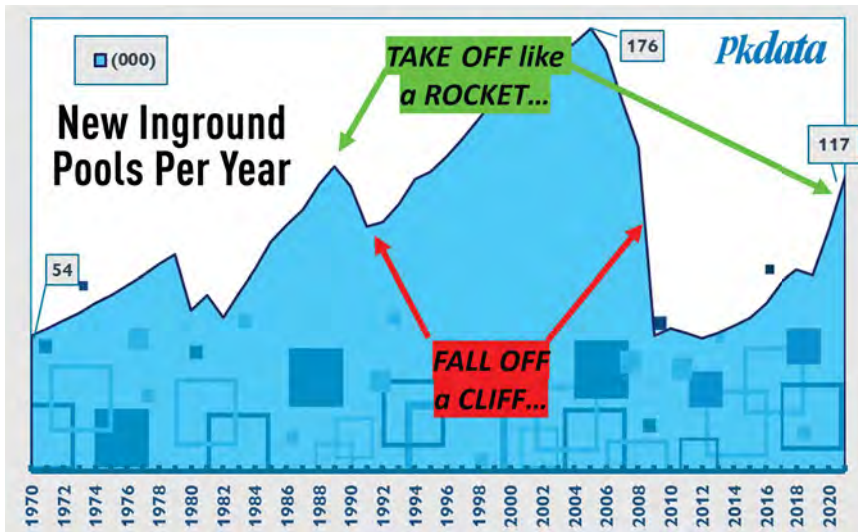
explained, “The pool is too deep for our children. That's why it's fenced off. We just need to fix the leak, because it's wasting water.”

Now, this is where a typical pool repair company would immediately start investigating the leak and prepare a quote for repairs.



Some pool owners simply fence off the deep end of a pool instead of changing it into an enjoyable, safe space.

HOW TO 10X YOUR RENOVATIONS REVENUE



The ups and downs of pool construction since 1970. Source: Pkdata

But that's not what ABC did. Instead, they spoke the magic words: "How are you currently using this space?"

"Well, mostly, the kids just come out here to jump rope on the deck. We don't let them get in the pool. It's just too deep for them."

"Oh, right, well that makes sense,"

he replied. "But did you know, if the pool is too deep, we can actually fix that. For example, what if it was more like 3 feet at either end, and maybe 4 feet in the middle?"

"What?" they replied. "You can do that?"

"Oh sure, it's quite popular. You

know, back in the 70s, everybody thought they wanted a deep pool. Then, people started to realize it wasn't much fun for the kids. So people often hire us to convert the deep end to a shallow end. We probably do at least two or three of these 'make-it-shallower' projects every year."

Now, suddenly, the wheels start turning in the homeowner's head. They are beginning to realize this albatross pool that was nothing but an eyecore might actually be fun again!

So the conversation continued. "Yes, we could add a tanning ledge on one end, and perhaps a nice raised water feature on the other end. And this deck.... Hmm, yes, we could bring in some good-looking travertine pavers. That would instantly make it a whole lot more inviting."

Before it was all said and done, the homeowner had agreed to everything suggested about the pool, plus the addition of an outdoor kitchen with a bar and a fireplace, and high-end appliances, to really do it right.

What could have been a \$15,000 leak

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repair quickly became a quarter-million-dollar renovation. And the homeowner was absolutely delighted, as were the children who could finally enjoy their own swimming pool.

On another occasion, a homeowner called in requesting a quote on replastering their pool. Once again, they asked the magic question: "How are you using this space?" The homeowner admitted, "We really don't use the pool much anymore; it just needs to be replastered."

The builder asked, "What if you had a tanning ledge? You could relax in a Ledge Lounger and listen to music, while your kids enjoy the rest of the pool."

"What? You can do that?"

"Yes, of course we can do that. You know what else we can do? We could take the opposite side of the swimming pool and convert that into a vanishing edge. It could spill over into a large catch basin, almost like a second pool."

Once again, long story short, the homeowner was only looking for new plaster but in the end, they more than doubled the square footage of their

swimming pool. And it had a stunning new modern look that they could be proud of. (And the revenue to the builder was 10 times what they would have gotten for plaster alone.)

Another builder client who uses this "renovation upsell" strategy told me about a homeowner who wanted new tile and coping. As the homeowner led him through the house to the backyard, my client couldn't help saying, "Your home is beautiful, but your backyard looks like 1985."

He was right, and the homeowner knew it. So rather than quoting a \$20,000 tile and coping job, he quoted a \$150,000 redesign of the pool. The homeowner wasn't ready for that, so the builder simply said, "If you change your mind, just let me know." Sure enough, six weeks later, the homeowner called back saying, "We're ready for you to handle our backyard project."

When my client asked, "What made you change your mind?" the homeowner said, "We got four or five other bids, and nobody had any of the ideas you had. Let's do this!"

The bottom line: Not only is there a ton of renovation opportunities out there, but there is a ton of upselling potential — if you only ask the questions and help the homeowner see what all is possible, even if that means removing the old pool and starting with a fresh, clean slate.

P.S. — There's an ironic epilogue to the story of the big ugly pool with a leak. About a year later, my client went back out to visit the home, and discovered that after their \$250,000 renovation, the homeowner spent an additional \$300,000 on a sports court, a putting green, landscaping, and a variety of other measures that ABC could have provided, if only he had explored further.

So don't be afraid to ask! ~

Brett Lloyd Abbott is the founder and CEO of Pool Builder Marketing LLC (www.PoolBuilderMarketing.com), a marketing consulting agency that works exclusively with swimming pool builders, pool service companies and high-end landscape professionals throughout the world. He is a frequent keynote speaker and leader of workshops and seminars.

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