



## **America's Swimming Pool Company Uses Housing Trend Knowledge to Propel Growth**

*Desiring to Connect Fragmented Pool Segment, Founder's Vision Proves Correct as Franchise Climbs over 50 Locations*

**Macon, GA** —In spite of poor economic conditions and a sluggish housing market, the country's largest swimming pool maintenance and repair franchise, America's Swimming Pool Company, has treaded water and continues expansion by fusing a fragmented industry through careful analysis of changes in housing trends along with a focus on professionalism and business-minded franchisees.

While the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that the average household spends almost 35 percent of its annual income on housing, cash-strapped homeowners have shifted the direction of those dollars from home improvements they might have undertaken five years ago to maintenance required to sustain the worth of their homes. Valuable assets, such as swimming pools, require consistent upkeep to maintain their value and have remained at the top of the priority list for homeowners in spite of their shrinking wallets. Though regular pool service and repair is a necessity to many homeowners, the industry reputation has previously been perceived as somewhat unreliable, as many service contractors lack the consistent organizational skills and support to run a steady business.

"The issue of unaccountability in the pool service industry was brought to my attention during my senior year of college, right around the time I was considering my next step," says Stewart Vernon, founder and chief executive of America's Swimming Pool Company. "I always knew I wanted to own my own business and that any good service business solved a real life problem for people. Realizing the problems in the pool industry, I set out to launch a business that would offer customers a level of service that just wasn't out there."

In the summer of 2001, Vernon graduated from college in Charleston, SC and moved back to his hometown of Macon, GA. Through an apprenticeship with a local pool service expert who was readying to retire, Vernon learned the ins and outs of the industry. He invested a few thousand dollars to purchase service equipment and a truck, and got to work as a single-owner operator. By age 22, ASP was launched.

Through word of mouth and community buzz, Vernon's business quickly expanded. He soon opened a retail location, which increased brand awareness and professional status. It wasn't long before Vernon was able to purchase several more trucks and gradually took on employees to help serve his growing customer base. In just the first four years of business, Vernon doubled annual sales every year, reaching \$1 million in revenue by 2005. "At just 25-years-old, I realized this business was bigger than the Macon market. We really had something here," Vernon recalls.

When Vernon's brother-in-law approached him about licensing the concept to open an ASP in Clemson, SC, Vernon began working with his attorney, Tom Swift, to draft a franchise agreement plan for future expansion. In January 2006, they launched ASP Franchising, the franchise's parent company. Within a year, other acquaintances caught wind of ASP's success and began buying in. Soon, even Swift himself became a franchisee and currently serves as chief operating officer of the umbrella firm. Today the company has 56 locations in over 100 cities, managing over 40 million gallons of water per week. ASP also renovates or remodels more than 250 pools each year.

Though there is more than ample room to continue growing, Vernon and Swift are cautious and diligent about whom they bring into the ASP fold. Through a careful three-step vetting process, they have selected franchisees ranging from former corporate executives to recent college graduates, all with the same mission of owning their own businesses and bringing high-quality pool service to their local markets.

“We have a lot of interest in new franchises because our business offers a low barrier to entry with just \$55,000 to \$65,000 in startup costs and a 25% to 50% net profit margin,” says Swift. “In the first four years, many of our franchisees are seeing average annual revenue of \$400,000. That’s a lot more than most service franchise concepts can offer.”

Franchisees undergo a rigorous two-week training program at the ASP headquarters in Macon, including management, bookkeeping, pool service, repair, and renovations. For those already in the field and desiring to convert to the ASP brand, Vernon says he waives the initial franchisee fee.

“We have one franchisee in Florida who doubled his sales in less than two years after converting to our brand,” says Vernon. “With a little education in marketing and management, plus the support of our franchise team, we’re helping business-minded people achieve the success they’ve always wanted.”

#### **About America’s Swimming Pool Company**

America’s Swimming Pool Company, the Southeast’s most respected swimming pool maintenance and repair franchise, was established in 2001 by Stewart Vernon of Macon, Georgia. The company was built on the belief that providing the highest-quality pool maintenance with competitive pricing and a high level of dependability will attract customers. Since 2005, ASP has expanded into 56 territories in the Southeast, servicing over 100 cities across the country. At this point, the company manages over 40 million gallons of water per week and renovates or remodels more than 250 pools each year. For information, please visit [www.asppoolandspaco.com](http://www.asppoolandspaco.com)

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