



Building Blocks for
Innovation.
The waters' clean, come on in.



It's no secret the pool and spa filtration industry has long existed on old-fashioned technology from the mid-20th century. When a new team came into Pleatco in 2006, it became clear to them that the players in the industry were playing a game of follow-the-follower. If you lead the field, you lead by default.

No one asked questions, the industry operated under the notion that good enough was just fine...let's not rock the boat. The new Pleatco crew did; they asked questions. They knew there was much more to this business of hygienic water filtration – and that getting answers about product performance and integrity would be essential in the transformation of the company's fortune.

As Pleatco's new owner Howard Smith says: "Clean water is our mission; it's what we do best. That's why we prefer not to think of ourselves as being in the cartridge filtration business; we're really in the *clean water business*."

After taking over Pleatco, Smith starting taking the engine apart, so to speak; what he saw was an industry complacent in all aspects of product development, testing and innovation. Players in the filter cartridge market were content with the status quo.

Very few questions were being asked, let alone answered, about the technology of water filtration for pools and spas or how to properly measure the effectiveness of what a filter did...or could do. The industry became satisfied with selling the same product for 45 years!

**"CLEAN WATER IS OUR MISSION;
IT'S WHAT WE DO BEST"**

IT'S A FACT:

A CHILD DRINKS 1.3 OZ OF WATER EVERY 45 MINUTES THEY PLAY IN A POOL

*Journal of Water and Health 2006 - US Environmental Protection Agency

Was That Water Really Clean?

OTHER COMPANIES IN THIS PRODUCT SPACE ARE CONTRACT MANUFACTURERS, BUILDING FILTERS TO THE SPECS OF OEM'S PRE-FABRICATED SYSTEMS. THEY HAVE NOT CARED ABOUT THE SCIENCE.



The answers Smith and his crew received set strategies in motion that, in a short time, would propel Pleatco to the top position in the market. Traditional industry thinking would be shown the door by the new Pleatco team.

It took plenty of work to bootstrap the company, too. Starting inside, Smith and his staff went to work building a new infrastructure from the ground up. Offices and IT systems were completely overhauled, customer service became more reliable than ever, and a top-notch research and development team was assembled. Things were starting to come together.

After modernizing Pleatco's New York manufacturing facility, Smith and the scientific team put on their detective hats and zeroed in on product effectiveness and performance. Once and for all it was time to separate myth from fact about filter cartridge performance – Pleatco's and their competitors.

Testing soon revealed a huge opportunity Pleatco would bring to the industry. Market strategies were designed and implemented that pushed the industry to ask the question "what constitutes a great filter cartridge?", propelling the company to the industry spotlight.

The Pleatco engine had shifted into high gear!

Most companies in this product space are contract manufacturers building filters to the specs of OEM's pre-fabricated filter systems. That's it. They have not cared or advanced the science of filtration. While Pleatco also services that market, there was a growing signs that this once small Northeast provider was, in reality, a sleeping giant. Once awakened, it could become one of the top companies in the trade by leading through innovation and science.

With a shift toward new product development, Pleatco wasn't just a manufacturer. With an invigorated passion to become number one in the market, it was time for Pleatco to set the tenor of marketplace dialog. It was time to take charge and push new technology – Pleatco's technology – into this product space.

Advance Innovation while Expanding Infrastructure

Pleatco realized the industry had to change in response to the marketplace and proudly led that charge by developing technology, building a world class brand, service, customer support and aggressively taking its story to the marketplace.

With targeted marketing, Pleatco re-educated consumers and pool professionals on their new generation of products. Seven years later, the company has catapulted from fifth place to number one. It's an amazing and happy success story.

The Pleatco team, however, does not rest easy – or on their laurels! From management to marketing to engineering and sales, the company is all about constant development – constant evolution. It's about staying ahead of the competition. "We're never done. NEVER," says Howard Smith.

"We have the right people and the right product at Pleatco. Our mission is to make pool water as clean as can be. * On average, a child drinks 1.3 ounces of water every hour they play in a pool. We have an obligation to do what's right." The smallest things DO matter the most.

PLEATCO EAST, MEET PLEATCO WEST

Three years ago, the company achieved a vision to better serve clients west of the Mississippi with the opening of a second manufacturing, testing and distribution facility in California. This second facility now allows products to be shipped to western and southern regions of the United States and pacific markets, quicker and more cost effectively.

Howard Smith also likens the second plant to an insurance policy. "God forbid anything happens to

our New York facility, but the dual plant and distribution facility helps guard against any potential catastrophic loss. Should something happen, it's still business as usual for customers. We take our customers and their business seriously. We pride ourselves on the fact that within 24 hours of receipt of an order, we're shipping that order out complete."

Customer interaction is paramount for Howard, too. "Recently I called a client to set up a meeting and they told me 'I love September appointments with Pleatco, because there's always something new – something different.' That's a testimony to the kind of company we are." From pool owners to poolguys and all levels of business in the industry, partnerships are the linchpin of Pleatco's success.



Leading through Science and Innovation.

With a five person engineering staff in place, boasting an unparalleled test facility containing 20-thousand gallons of test water, housed in indoor and outdoor labs, the company could now test theories, pitting competitive products against those Pleatco was now engineering and manufacturing.

"Looking back," says Smith, "we knew we had to develop our own research and engineering department – that's one of the most important developments of this company. Research and development; it was practically nonexistent elsewhere."

As Smith proudly points out, "No one was previously testing filter cartridge product to see if it actually filtered the water; clean water is what we're about. Our goal was PURE: become the leading EXPERTS in the field of filtration through constant development and improvement"

The testing and engineering of new filtration designs and media allowed Pleatco to bring unique, patented products to the marketplace; products so innovative, it has set Pleatco apart as the authority in media filtration.

As the pool industry found itself grappling with a changing marketplace thanks to the soured economy, a savvy customer emerged. The very survival of the marketplace became pinned to ideas and product development that would make pool operation a more economically feasible luxury item.



Top Left: Pleatco Outdoor Test Pool Facility. Top Right: Richard Medina, Pleatco VP Engineering Bottom Left: Abhilash Pillia, Pleatco Dir. Research Bottom Right: Pleatco Technology Center

"We're never done. NEVER. We have an obligation to do what's right."

HOWARD SMITH, CEO PLEATCO



Above: Tom Cuccinatta, Florida with new Pleatco Advanced Pool Filter Cartridge.

Constant Improvement.

It's astonishing to look at Pleatco's beginnings and realize the enormous growth it has experienced since 2006. Sure, the company operates under a simple two word statement of "constant improvement." But when you dig down just below the surface, you see how those words accurately represent company DNA.

"We like to concentrate on what we are, it's tough to have a crystal ball, but as you build a company you have to have a vision of where you want to go" says Smith.

"Good, successful companies stick with what they do best – and seek opportunities in the future. We're not afraid to change...it's what good companies do."

You can't fake this commitment to constant improvement and customer care. It's not a mantra either; it's an intrinsic belief system. You can't distill it all down to one idea or philosophy; it's about honor, integrity and doing what's right across the board.

Never complacent, after an extensive two years of development and endless testing in the lab and field, Pleatco is set to reveal Pleatco Advanced, the next generation of filtration, once again pushing boundaries and taking water filtration technology to the next level.

This once sleeping giant of a company has awakened to become the standard bearer of the industry it serves. Pleatco has truly become

