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Bob Zerull
QCA Spas

production strategy," Zerull says. This move was part of a broader effort to bring in experienced professionals, including a sales staff led by industry veteran Rick Pettit, who could help QCA

Spas navigate the complexities of the modern hot tub industry.

"We went from a company that knew a lot about QCA Spas to a company that's now more well-versed within the industry," Zerull says. "It was a neat experience to watch it go from this mom-and-pop company to a company that is more modern

and up-to-date but still always looking to improve."

Pettit, the company's director of sales, echoes this sentiment, highlighting QCA Spas' commitment to removing roadblocks for dealers.

"We're taking things in a totally different [direction] where people come first, valuing our business partners as opposed to just seeing them as a way to gain more sales and profits," he says. "We want a value relationship. It's threefold. It's the manufacturer, the dealer and their customer, who is our customer, too."

BUILDING A STRONG TEAM AND DEALER NETWORK

Central to QCA Spas' strategy is its collaborative culture.

"[We're] a team," Pettit says. "It isn't the sales guys out



Bob Zerull, left, and Jim Ketelsen are focused on building networks and driving growth.

Small Beginnings to Big Growth

QCA Spas' relationship-driven success

BY BETHANY BRANSCUM

DEEP IN THE HEART OF IOWA, QCA SPAS has been a player in the hot tub industry for decades, evolving from a small, family-run business into a modern, thriving company. Founded by Keith Hall in 1966, the legacy continues under the current leadership of Bob Zerull, Vicki Hall, Jim Ketelsen and their dedicated team.

A DIY LEGACY

Keith Hall, a longtime hot tub retailer, was driven by a simple idea: instead of purchasing hot tubs from others, why not create his own? This do-it-yourself spirit led to the birth of QCA Spas.

"It started out very small and was more of a DIY thing — figure it out as you go," says Zerull, co-owner of QCA Spas who started at the company as an accountant in 2010. "And then you get better and better at it."

In recent years, QCA Spas has seen substantial growth.

"We've doubled in size [from what we were before the pandemic]," Zerull says. That success is partly due to the philosophy of being "the easiest company to work with." It's ingrained in the company's culture, influencing everything from tech support to manufacturing processes.

"We want to make sure that when the dealer has an issue or a question, we [are] able to resolve it," Zerull says. "And because of that, we've been adding to our dealer base. With a nice network of

dealers plus having our own retail stores, between all of us working together, we should be able to grow as a collective and not just as a hot tub manufacturer."

TRANSITION AND MODERNIZATION

The leadership shift following Keith Hall's death in June 2021 marked a new chapter for QCA Spas. Zerull took on an ownership role alongside Vicki Hall, Keith's wife, and Ketelsen, another longtime employee. This transition brought significant changes, particularly in modernizing the company's operations.

"We brought in a plant manager from John Deere to help us rearrange our

there separate from tech support or the guy doing the plumbing. It's a full team effort and no one person is more important than the other." This holistic approach ensures everyone is aligned toward a common goal — delivering the best possible products and services to customers.

Zerull shares this long-term vision. "I'm more interested in the relationships; the profit and the sale will come with that — you don't have to force it," he says.

Pettit's experience in the industry has been invaluable in building a loyal dealer network. After briefly retiring, he was drawn back by the opportunity to work with QCA Spas.

"I saw a lot of credibility in how [Zerull] wants to grow the business and how he puts others interests before his own, and that character drew me in," he says. "I wanted to work with a company where I could have an impact."

INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS AND FUTURE GROWTH

QCA Spas has developed new systems like the SaltFresh H2O, a salt system that transformed its approach to water sanitation. The company also examined price points customers were interested in, identifying what dealers needed and producing tubs in those ranges.

These advancements, combined with new features like lighted cup holders and waterfalls, ensure QCA Spas' products are high-performing and aesthetically appealing. Beyond the increase in value and visual appeal, the company has also reworked its warranty to be competitive with other manufacturers and developed programs to help its dealers with the showroom and customer experience.

Zerull is optimistic about the future. "I think we can double again by 2026," he says. The company's focus will continue to be on building relationships, both with dealers and within the team.

"The more we focus on our relationships, that's going to make us more successful," he says.

Pettit shares Zerull's excitement for the next stages of QCA's journey: "I'm having more fun than I've ever had in this industry." ■

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QCA Spas



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