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Items of Interest: Case Histories

Driving a Customized Challenge: Making Waves Can Be Good

Ask any fitness expert and there'll be little disagreement—swimming is one of the most complete exercises. Not only is it beneficial to the muscles in your upper body, your lower body, and your legs, it provides an excellent workout for your lungs and your heart as well.

Of course, we are talking “serious” swimming, not a leisurely dip in a pool or a few strokes when and where one feels like it, but disciplined, consistent, and increasingly challenging swimming: the kind that pits a determined swimmer against his or her own limitations and demands relentless effort and constant improvement. For that swimming, a pool won't do. So SwimEx takes over.



The drives that power these pounding currents come from AC Tech, along with the software that makes them match the application.

If There's a Will...

Many successful companies got their start because their founder was looking for an answer to a frustrating problem, perhaps a problem that closely affected them. That's the case with Rhode Island

company SwimEx. MIT graduate and original company founder Stan Charren created the first SwimEx machine. With a chronically bad back, he had been advised by his orthopedist to take up swimming in order to build up his muscles and relieve pain.

Charren was pleasantly surprised with the results, but became increasingly frustrated with how much time it took to enjoy his daily swimming exercises. Driving back and forth to the pool and fighting traffic could take a couple of hours, after which his muscles would quickly become a tight and painful knot all over again. The alternative, a home indoor lap pool, seemed prohibitive. So, true to his MIT background, he took matters into his own hands, and he and some friends set up a classic “garage operation” for manufacturing a swimming treadmill. A year and several thousand dollars later, they had developed the first SwimEx machine.

“We needed the right drive to control the speed of the paddle-wheel propulsion system that creates the current,” explains product engineer Mark Fryer. “We looked for an inverter that would be capable of dealing with the pool's GFCI circuit breaker.” In addition, the drive had to be the right size and cost-effective.

How did they solve the rather complex problems presented by this design? We'll tell you at *AC Tech* at www.newequipment.com. Click on “Case Histories.”

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