

## **Understated design, concealed technology, individual solutions and a home that is both a meeting place and a refuge**

At the aquanale press conference on 31 May 2017, Dieter C. Rangol, Managing Director of the German Federal Association for Swimming Pools and Wellness (Bundesverband Schwimmbad- und Wellness e.V., or bsw), will speak about industry trends and topics. In his presentation, he will focus on the development of the home from being simply a dwelling into a place where our private, professional and social lives are brought together.

“Social conditions are playing into our hands. Increased health consciousness is boosting the demand for active relaxation, comfort products are “socially acceptable” owing to the ageing population, and the new wave of environmentalism is giving rise to energy-efficient solutions. The megatrends and their impact on our industry are described in detail in aquanale’s trend report.

“I would like to highlight one thing in particular from which the market for privately used pools and wellness facilities is benefitting: the development of the home from being simply a residence into a place where our private, professional and social lives are all brought together.

“The home has really evolved. For a long time, it was exclusively a place to live; now it has multiple uses. On the one hand, it is somewhere private you can seclude yourself. On the other hand, in the context of general mobility, the home has also become a place for work. The term “home office” is a good description: on the one hand, it’s a “home” and, on the other, an “office”, too. And there’s a third aspect. The home should also provide a backdrop for social interaction and recreational activities. As a consequence of the changes to the home, status symbols are also changing. Today, particular importance is attached to high-quality furniture, stylish home accessories and sophisticated home automation technology. After all, the homeowner wants to create a pleasant atmosphere for himself and for his friends. Having one’s own pool fills the role of the home gym or wellness centre, but at the same time is also a head-turner at any garden party. Surrounding it with appropriate outdoor furniture, a stylish barbecue grill and spectacular fire features paves the way for unforgettable moments.

“The 2017 Trend Report refers to “hygge”. This is the current attitude to life, which focuses on “the things that really matter”. It’s all about non-material values, such as spending time with friends, being there for your family, finding happiness. In a nutshell: the emphasis is on social factors, but without abandoning aesthetics. Socialising in chic surroundings - that’s what counts nowadays.

“The current zeitgeist calls for bright colours, transparent surfaces, natural materials and purist design. Consequently, you will now find pool and wellness facilities that exude timeless elegance thanks to linear architecture and clear forms. They are simple and unpretentious, but classic and chic at the same time. But ultimately, the individualisation megatrend is pervading all design trends. Anyone who has an appetite for wellness can have his facility designed to suit his own preferences. Free-form structures instead of fixed designs - this is what it all comes down to in the end.

“And this is not just the case in Germany. The same megatrends and design movements can be seen all over the world. The programme for the congress held during aquanale is therefore also developing a more international flavour. The event is no longer called the “Cologne” Swimming Pool & Wellness Forum. Instead, from this year onwards, it will be entitled the “International” Swimming Pool & Wellness Forum. All of the presentations are offered in German and English, and the subject matters have a global feel. There will be discussions about international regulations and standards, including the new European regulations for domestic swimming pools - EN 16582 and EN 16713 - as well as global design trends, technologies and energy-saving concepts. Amongst the invitees are representatives from the US company Genesis 3, who will be presenting design concepts and creative ideas from all over the world.

“We have also kept the “hygge” lifestyle concept in mind when putting together the convention programme. Therefore, in addition to talks specific to the swimming-pool industry, there will also be discussions highlighting social themes. One such issue will be that of strengthening communication skills - both verbal and non-verbal.

“Promoting communication and maintaining contacts - this will be a key feature throughout aquanale. The trade fair has become a forum for international dialogue. Word has got around. For example, we are expecting a group of trade visitors from the USA to attend the forthcoming event. In addition, representatives of associations from Europe and overseas have been invited in order to discuss the possibility of forming an international federation. Who knows? Perhaps Cologne will be the place where the foundations are laid for the first world swimming pool organisation.”

Check against delivery.

Sample images for “pools of today” are available to download for free here:

This installation shows that glass surfaces, high-quality stone and natural materials are in widespread use:

<https://www.Flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/33202343025/in/album-72157680842073086/>

Elegant understatement is in demand. This also applies to technology. Although it’s true that the customer wants “high-end” equipment, he doesn’t want it to be seen. For example, we can see here that even the overflow channel has been sculpted as an elegant pool surround:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/33160624236/in/album-72157680842073086/>

Alongside all the fundamental design simplicity, individuality is alive and kicking. For instance, a pool can be imagined as a mountain lake:

<https://www.Flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/33045573902/in/album-72157680842073086/>

Of course, it’s also possible to create a glamorous location with a touch of magic - as shown by this pool: <https://www.Flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/16691846945/in/album-72157651107853902/>

Or you can fantasise that your pool is a balcony:

<https://www.Flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/16690519411/in/album-72157651107853902/>

Swimming-pool construction has evolved from simply “building a pool” to designing a water landscape. This means that the swimming pool’s surroundings are deliberately incorporated in the design, thus creating a holistic water and living concept. A masterful interplay of swimming pool and hall is very much in evidence in this design:

<https://www.Flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/16505705459/in/album-72157651107853902/>

Here, too, the pool is presented as part of the room, because the shapes, colours and materials are in harmony:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/24458152253/in/album-72157664591034992/>

And here, a near-natural lake landscape has been brought to life:

<https://www.Flickr.com/photos/bundesverbandsschwimmbad/16504462960/in/album-72157651107853902/>