

Fountain Technology Gains Popularity

Monday, Sept. 14, 2009, 3:30 p.m., EDT

When I attended the Gafa show, the world's largest trade show, in Germany last year, I noticed a common thread that ran through the water garden part of the show. A huge display of fountain technology exploded on the scene.

I saw thousands of fountains, from table top versions to a \$400,000 water jet fountain with LED lights that rivaled the Bellagio Hotel fountain in Las Vegas, Nev., only smaller. This fountain was programmed to music. It was really cool to see the fountains jump as Cold Play rose to a crescendo.

Since Europe seems to set the pace in the pond world, it made me think that fountains will become a dominant force in the near future. I have been getting more inquiries about fountains, rather than ponds.

Perhaps the drought affecting many parts of the United States is driving this in many sectors. The common perception is that standing water, as found in ponds, will evaporate faster than water in a fountain, especially if pondless waterfalls are grouped in the fountain category.

Those of us who have installed many water gardens over the past 15 years might look at the Bellagio Hotel's magnificent water feature, scratch our heads and wonder "how does one get into the fountain-building business?" If you got a call from a major hotel in your area and they wanted a smaller type of Bellagio Hotel fountain, would you refer them to the yellow pages (thus leaving lots of money on the table), or would you take up the challenge? Where would you turn to learn this new technology?