

# Inside the infinity-pool shortage: Luxury-pool builders are setting minimum prices as high as \$500,000 and turning away customers because they can't find enough workers

Hayley Cuccinello Oct 6, 2021, 5:30 AM



"There isn't enough manpower. There isn't enough material in the pipeline," Baumann, the CEO of Creative Environments, said. "It's probably the most awkward moment I've ever seen in the business." Courtesy of Neave Group

## Rising costs haven't deterred affluent customers

Ryan Hughes, a designer in South Florida, got bombarded with inquiries from wealthy New York and California transplants. He whittled down requests by doubling his minimum project budget to \$500,000. Customers now have to wait six months before design consultation begins, up from two to three months before the pandemic.

But plenty of people are still willing to pay up. Hughes is expecting to bill \$18 million in construction costs this year, up from \$13 million in 2020, he said. His backlog has more than tripled to \$49 million worth of deals, he added, as the firm is selling projects faster than it can build them.

"These people are moving from California and New York, where things are already more expensive. These numbers aren't shocking to them," Hughes said.