



# Tuning the Supply Chain for Growth

A guide for pool and spa chemical providers on navigating  
complexity and compliance risk in an evolving climate

# Supply Chains as Unpredictable as the Weather

When volatility first surged several years ago, pool and spa chemical providers were forced to find creative ways to keep product flowing—diversifying suppliers, expanding import options, even creating custom blends. But now, evolving industry pressures are making it difficult for them to differentiate and compete with their current supply chain:



## Global Volatility

Between tariff fluctuations, geopolitical instability, and freight disruptions, overseas sourcing has become a guessing game. Some estimates put ocean shipping costs at nearly 7x pre-pandemic levels.<sup>1</sup>



## Climate-Driven Demand Swings

As temperature and rain events grow more frequent and intense<sup>2</sup>, weather-driven spikes in pool/spa usage are more common—putting pressure on suppliers to position inventory for sudden regional surges. Plus, customers expect immediate fulfillment, where and when they need it.



## Compliance Scrutiny

With EPA inspections up, and more audits, label rules, and sub-registration liabilities, smaller teams are struggling to stay on top of it all. Meanwhile, companies creating their own blends are taking on another set of risks.



# Balancing Risk and Complexity

Diversifying sources of polyquat once helped mitigate risk. Today, it's creating complexity that slows operations and limits growth.

Staying stocked now often means a combination of two approaches—but with fragmented sourcing, both can be problematic:

## Strategy 1:

### **Buying bulk ingredients to reformulate and package.**

It can be cost-effective, but requires accounting for variability in price, lead time, ingredient qualities, blending accuracy, and the shelf life of any overstock.

## Strategy 2:

### **Ordering pre-mixed bottles on a just-in-time basis.**

Fast and easy—but often comes at a premium price, which hurts cash flow and margin.



Meanwhile, trying to focus on growth while juggling all these variables inevitably leads to the occasional unfulfillable rush order, expired pallet, or audit surprise.

It all chips away at profitability and customer confidence at a time when the market has never been so crowded.

# Complicated Logistics Impede Growth

Chemical providers diversified to de-risk. Now that fragmentation is the risk.

Executives forced to double as weather analysts, supply-chain planners, and compliance officers, on top of growing the business, can face unexpected consequences:

- **Logistics they can't control:** Multiple sources mean unpredictable lead times and inconsistent quality. One late shipment can lead to missing an entire peak season order, and rush freight and redundant logistics cut into already tight margins.
- **Inventory they can't protect:** Over-ordering to stay safe often leads to pallets of expired inventory. That means working capital gets trapped in stock suppliers can't move.
- **Blind spots they can't cover:** Blending from different suppliers can create EPA registration gaps, exposing companies to costly audits and fines.

When yesterday's "safety net" becomes today's liability, standing still isn't an option.



Penn State researchers recently studied what happens when "firms trade off the lower price of farther inputs with the increase in exposure to demand volatility and longer delays."

**They found average output losses of 7.3% and price increases of 1.8%.<sup>3</sup>**

# Consolidate Complexity, Shift Focus to Growth

Instead of solving for risk, solve for control.

When chemical providers source more of their polyquat from a domestic partner like Buckman—who was the first to produce the WSCP® molecule and has been an industry leader for decades—they can:



## Secure Their Supply.

Buckman controls and heavily invests in its own raw materials, manufacturing in multiple facilities and delivering strong oversight of process safety and risk management, all to ensure ongoing supply for customers.



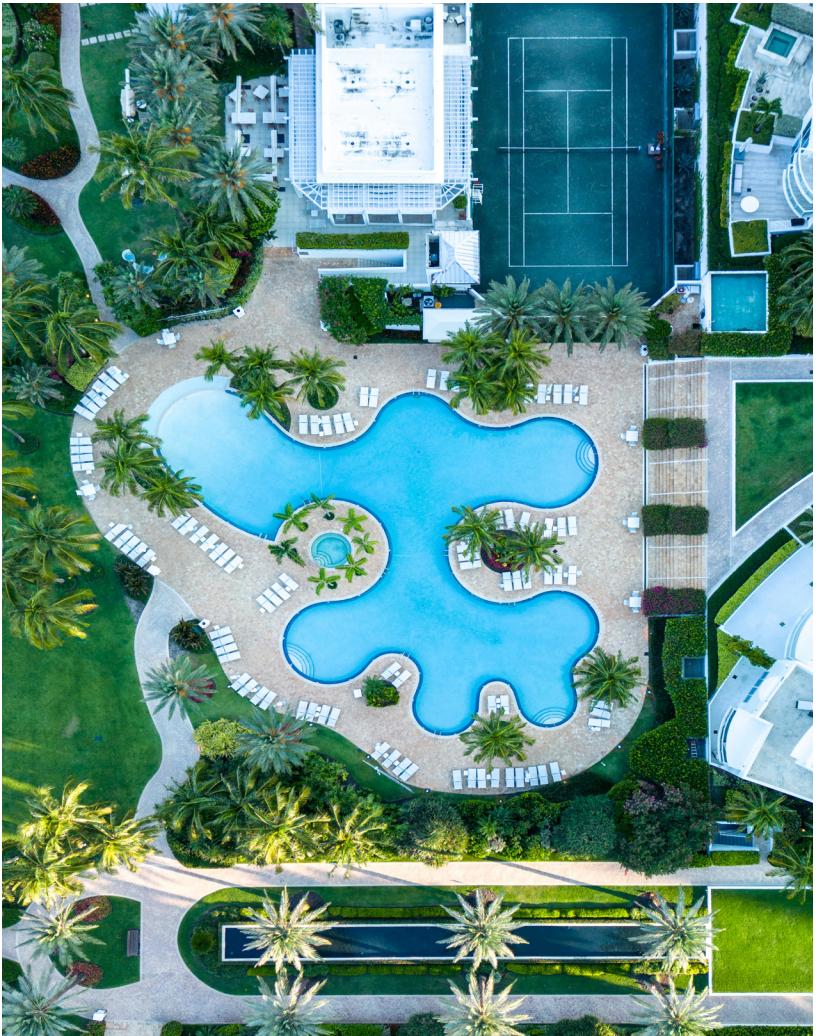
## Meet Fluctuating Demand.

As a U.S.-based supplier, Buckman can work with customers on stocking agreements, priority allocations, flexible pack sizes, and direct plant scheduling in volumes that fit their exact demand needs.



## Confidently Stand on Quality.

Buckman WSCP is known for its ability to pair effectively with oxidizers. It's non-foaming, stable over a wide pH range, and offers a consistent, high-quality make-up with a lower concentration of heavy metals versus many imported options.



# A Supply Chain that Propels Growth

When pool and spa chemical providers consolidate complexity with Buckman, they can confidently focus on growth, because they can:



## **Say "yes" to every seasonal surge.**

without having to overbuy or plan for three-month lead times. Avoid supply chain disruptions and keep product flowing, while reducing middleman premiums, tariff exposure, and expiry risk.



## **Differentiate on product performance.**

—not just the label or price. And for customers looking to dial in custom formulations, Buckman experts provide direct guidance and guardrails for optimal performance.



## **Simplify and de-risk compliance.**

even as the product line evolves. Buckman backs its chemistry with the expertise customers need, including sub-registration support, audit-ready recipe and label guidance, and a seasoned U.S. regulatory team with quick turns on change control.



## **Launch branded blends faster.**

Buckman's experts help ensure private-label SKUs are audit-ready, so suppliers don't have to sacrifice market opportunities or peace of mind.

# Simplify Your Supply Chain with the Trusted Chemistry Leader

Going after growth is a big strategic bet.

When you evolve with Buckman, you're not just getting a chemistry supplier.

You're working with a reliable, nearby partner you can trust to help simplify your path to sustainable success.



Want to learn more? [Contact Buckman Today.](#)



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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>2</sup>"2024 was nation's warmest year on record: Year marked by active hurricane season, near-record number of tornadoes." January 2025 monthly report. U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

<sup>3</sup>"The Cost of Delivery Days." Carreras-Valle, Ferrari. American Economic Association academic journal. May 2025.