



# *Impact Report*

———— 2025 ————





# 2025 Year In Review

## January

- MRAA Names 2025 Board of Directors
- MRAA Announces 2025 Young Leaders Advisory Council
- Advisory Council of Marine Associations Approves New Coalition Agreement
- Proposed Right Whale Vessel Speed Rule Rescinded
- Hanson-Milone Safe Boating Act Signed Into Law
- Discover Boating Increases Boat Show Media Investment by 30%

## February

- MRAA Launches Dealer Advocate Newsletter
- Volvo Penta, MRAA Partner on Dealer Development, Training

## March

- Discover Boating Dealer Finder Tool Increases Introductions
- MRAA Supports “25 in 2025” Campaign to Create 25th Office of Outdoor Recreation
- Discover Boating Launches New Safe Boating Video Series

## April

- Beneficial Ownership Reporting Requirements Removed
- MRAA Invites Partners, Manufacturers to Host Dealer Meetings at Dealer Week 2025
- MRAA Releases Online Boat Marketplace Comparison Tool
- MRAA Adds First Boat Brand Partner

## May

- Dealer Week 2025 Surpasses 100 Exhibitors Milestone
- Texas Boating Bill Protects Consumers, Retailers
- MRAA Attends American Boating Congress

## June

- Discover Boating Partners with Black Boaters Summit in 3 Cities
- Minnesota Lead Key Ban Pushed Back
- MRAA Backs Reauthorization of Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund

## July

- MRAA Launches 2026 Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program
- Nautique Becomes First to Roll Out MRAA's Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program
- NMMA, MRAA Launch Market Expansion Advisory Group
- Data Shows Record High Fishing Participation Reached in 2024
- MRAA Attends National Marine Trades Council Conference

## August

- MRAA Educational Foundation Opens Scholarship Applications for 2025
- Massachusetts Marine Trades Association Secures Workforce Funding

## September

- MAPOceans Act Passes Senate
- WSIA, MRAA Announce Joint Advocacy Session at Dealer Week to Address State and Local Wake Regulations

## October

- MRAA Launches Sales Leadership Certification for Marine Dealerships
- Discover Boating Hosts Marketing Leadership Summit
- MRAA President Matt Gruhn Receives William B. Otto Award

## November

- 16 New Standard Partners Commit to MRAA
- MRAA Adds 3 New Boat Brand Members

## December

- MRAA Launches "Dealership of the Future" Task Force
- MRAA Recognizes Dealer Advocacy Leaders with 2025 Dealer Ambassador Awards
- MRAA Educational Foundation Names Kim Sweers 2025 Darlene Briggs Marine Woman of the Year
- MRAA Names 2025 Great Dealerships to Work For
- Tom Whowell, Bob Bense Recognized for Commitment to Advocacy
- Randell Seyfert of Captain's Marine Named Marine Industry Trailblazer
- Dealer Week Conference and Expo Reports Increased Attendance, Record Expo Hall

# A Note from the MRAA President

*On behalf of the MRAA  
Board of Directors and Team*

The marine industry did not have an easy year in 2025. Markets tightened. Sales slowed. Uncertainty lingered longer than many expected. And yet, this was also a year when leadership became more necessary than it has been in a long time.

We often say around here that bad habits are built in the good times, while good habits are built in the hard times. Another way to think about that is that when conditions are favorable, progress can feel inevitable. But when conditions are difficult, progress must be intentionally designed. And that distinction shaped nearly every decision we made at MRAA this past year.

As you'll see throughout this Impact Report, 2025 was focused on doing the right work. Work that strengthens the industry, supports dealers through real change, and helps ensure we are prepared for the next chapter.

At the center of that effort is MRAA's ongoing work to define and build the future of the marine dealership profession. You may see us refer to this as The Dealership of the Future. Candidly, that name is less important than the responsibility behind it.

What matters to our team is the belief that this profession deserves clear standards, modern leadership models, and a shared vision for what excellence looks like in a changing world. This begins and ends with our passion for helping dealers build resilient, relevant businesses that create confidence for customers, teams and partners alike.

This important work is long-term by design. It requires listening, collaboration and a willingness to rethink assumptions that once

served us well. And it requires leadership, especially when the market makes standing still feel so tempting.

In that context, one of the strongest signals of MRAA's year came from Dealer Week. In the midst of a challenging market, we hosted one of the largest conferences in our history. That tells us that dealers are not standing still. They are leaning in. They are investing in clarity, capability and community when it matters most.

Alongside it, we established strong support for an all-new Sales Leadership Certification Program. These are clear reflections of an industry choosing substance over noise and preparation over reaction.

None of this work happens in isolation. It is guided by an engaged board, carried forward by a committed team, and strengthened by members and partners who believe that leadership and success in this industry are not solo acts. Together, we are stewards of this profession — not preserving it as it was but helping it become what it must be.

This Impact Report captures the progress we made in 2025. More importantly, it reflects a shared commitment to what comes next for the dealerships and the leaders who choose to build the future of our profession deliberately, collaboratively and with purpose. One dealership at a time.

Thank you for being part of that important work.



**MATT GRUHN**  
MRAA PRESIDENT



# Contents

2025 Year In Review .....	2
A Note from the MRAA President.....	4
2025 Board of Directors.....	6
Young Leaders Advisory Council Adds New Leadership, Members .....	8
Advocacy Year In Review .....	10
Right Whale Vessel Speed Rule Withdrawn.....	10
Hanson-Milone Safe Boating Act Signed into Law .....	11
Texas Boating Bill Protects Consumers, Retailers.....	11
Minnesota Lead Key Ban Pushed Back.....	12
ACMA Approves New Coalition Agreement .....	12
Dealer Advocate Newsletter.....	13
Small Business Legislative Council Fly-in.....	13
American Boating Congress .....	14
National Marine Trades Council Annual Conference.....	15
Two Dealers Honored for Commitment to Protecting Access, Advancing Advocacy .....	15
MRAA Adds New Staff.....	16
Volvo Penta & MRAA Partner in Dealer Development, Training .....	17
Discover Boating Updates .....	18
Dealer Finder Tool Increases Introductions .....	18
Discover Boating Launches New Safe Boating Video Series .....	19
Discover Boating Partners with Black Boater's Summit in 3 Cities .....	20
Discover Boating Hosts Marketing Leadership Summit .....	20
MRAA Launches Boat Brand Partnership Level.....	21
MRAA Launches 2026 Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program.....	22
NMMA & MRAA Create Market Expansion Advisory Group .....	23
Data Shows Record High Fishing Participation Reached in 2024.....	24
MRAA Launches Sales Leadership Certification for Marine Dealerships .....	25
MRAA President Matt Gruhn Receives William B. Otto Award.....	26
MRAA Launches 'Dealership of the Future' Task Force .....	27
Dealer Week Grows Attendance and Exhibits .....	28

# 2025 Board of Directors

The Marine Retailers Association of the Americas named **Joe Lewis** as Chairman and added four new members to its board of directors.

Lewis of Mount Dora Boating Center and Marina in Mount Dora, Fla., is MRAA's longest-serving board member, having been on the MRAA Board since 2009. He previously served as Chairman from 2017-2018, and he was asked by his board colleagues to remain on the board after his term.

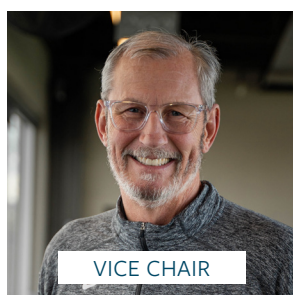
Lewis replaced **Jeff Strong**, Strong's Marine in New York, who moved into the Immediate Past Chair position. **Craig Brosenne**, President of Hagadone Marine Group in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, was named Vice Chair. Brosenne joined the board in 2014. **Carly Poole** was named the Secretary/Treasurer. Poole has served on the board for a dozen years.

Lewis, Brosenne, Poole and Strong comprised the **MRAA's Executive Committee** in 2025.



**Joe Lewis**

Mount Dora Boating Center



**Craig Brosenne**

Hagadone Marine Group



**Carly Poole**

Buckeye Marine



**Jeff Strong**

Strong's Marine

New additions to the MRAA Board of Directors included **Sean Horsfall**, President of Len's Cove Marina in Ontario, Canada (Region 11 Canada); **Eric Smith**, General Manager at Colorado Boat Center (Region 8 – CO, IA, KS, MO, MT, NE, NM, WY); **Chris Butler**, President at Butler Marine in South Carolina (Region 4 – KY, NC, SC, TN); and **Wendy Ramsey**, Owner at RBK Distribution in Ontario, Canada, as Director At Large, representing MRAA's Young Leaders Advisory Council.



**Sean Horsfall**

Len's Cove Marina



**Eric Smith**

Colorado Boat Center



**Chris Butler**

Butler Marine



**Wendy Ramsey**

RBK Distribution



In addition to the newly appointed board members, returning MRAA Regional Directors include:



REGION 1

**Craig LeBlanc**

Allen Harbor Marine Service



REGION 2

**Bob Petzold**

Petzold's Marine Center



REGION 3

**Bryan Buckland**

Chessie Marine Sales



REGION 5

**Paul Berube**

Boaters Exchange



REGION 6

**Chad Taylor**

Taylor's South Shore Marine



REGION 7

**Jason Shallcross**

Reed's Marine



REGION 9

**Brandon Sharpe**

Arrowhead Yacht Club & Marina



REGION 10

**Bob Bense**

Superior Boat Repair & Sales



DIRECTOR AT LARGE

**Susan Duquette**

Lakeview Marine





# Young Leaders Advisory Council Adds New Leadership, Members

**Wendy Ramsey**, owner at RBK Distribution in Ontario, Canada, took the helm as MRAA's YLAC Chair. Ramsey, who has a passion for workforce development and serves as a Director At Large on the MRAA Board of Directors, is a young marine professional making moves throughout her region and the industry. **J Hurless**, from Reeder-Trausch Marine in Rockville, Ind., is the new Co-Chair. J has been actively involved in the MRAA for years and continues to leave his mark with his industry leadership.



CHAIR

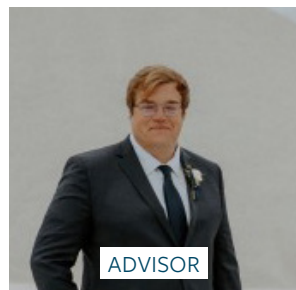
**Wendy Ramsey**  
RBK Distribution



CO-CHAIR

**J Hurless**  
Reeder-Trausch Marine

## New YLAC Members for 2025



ADVISOR

**Hayden Hall**  
Sales Manager, *Hall's Sports Center, Muskegon, Mich.*



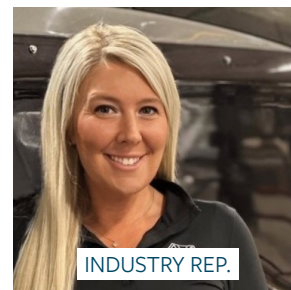
ADVISOR

**Andrew Schraedly**  
Co-Owner/Business Development Manager, *Schraedly Marine Inc./Charles Mill Marina, Mansfield, Ohio*



ADVISOR

**Ally Stacy**  
Marketing Manager, *Strong's Marine, Mattituck, N.Y.*



INDUSTRY REP.

**Miranda Doan**  
Marketing Manager, *Avalon & Tahoe Pontoons, Alma, Mich.*



## Returning YLAC Members for 2025



ADVISOR

### James Cimino

Owner,  
*Sierra Hills Mobile Marine,  
Auburn, Calif.*



ADVISOR

### Justin Dysert

Sales & Finance Manager,  
*Taylor's South Shore Marina,  
Waynesville, Ohio*



ADVISOR

### Christian Hansen

General Manager,  
*Idaho Water Sports, Idaho  
Falls, Idaho*



ADVISOR

### Ashlynn LaLonde Olson

Vice President, *Hutchinson's  
Boat Works, Inc.*



ADVISOR

### Heather Mess

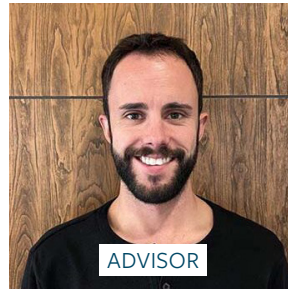
National Marina Manager,  
*MarineMax, Inc., Clearwater,  
Fla.*



ADVISOR

### Will Monson

General Sales Manager,  
*Moose Landing Marina,  
Naples, Maine*



ADVISOR

### Braden Panasiuk

General Manager,  
*Gibbons Motor Toys, Salmon  
Arm, B.C., Canada*



ADVISOR

### Jon Stovall

Sales Associate/Licensed  
Broker, *MarineMax- Lake  
Lanier, Cumming, Ga.*



INDUSTRY REP.

### Kenda Kennard

Business Development  
Representative, *Huntington  
Distribution Finance,  
Schaumburg, Ill.*



MRAA STAFF REP.

### Sarah Korbel

Events and Operations  
Manager, *MRAA, Minneapolis,  
Minn.*

The mission of the YLAC is to supplement and support the mission of the Board of Directors of the MRAA. YLAC provides guidance as to the current state of the marine retailers' day-to-day operations, both in challenges and opportunities. YLAC strives to set the example in identifying, inspiring, recruiting and onboarding key younger generation members to participate in the association, facilitating the future growth and success of MRAA.

# Advocacy Year In Review

MRAA exists to serve as the voice of marine dealers in Washington and in state legislatures, promoting boating-friendly policy while fighting off harmful legislation. In 2025, MRAA was proud to be part of many significant wins for our industry.

## 2025 Top 10 MRAA Advocacy Wins

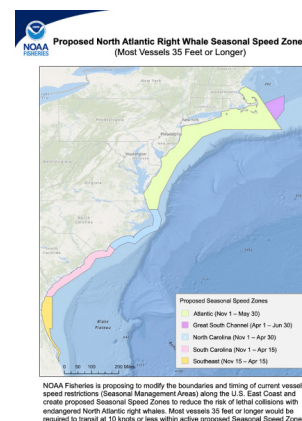
1. Qualified Business Income tax deduction made permanent in Big Beautiful Bill
2. Big Beautiful Bill allows for college saving accounts to be used for non-college career training
3. Defeated increase in boat tax in New Jersey
4. Defeated proposed luxury tax in Washington State
5. Sunk efforts to increase tax on recreational boats in Rhode Island
6. Fought for decreased personal property tax on recreational boats in South Carolina
7. Boating safety Hanson-Milone Act signed into law in Massachusetts
8. Maryland State Boat Act passed and made improvement to Waterways Improvement Fund
9. Defeated bills regulating wake surfing in multiple states
10. Fought burdensome PFAS regulations in multiple states

## Right Whale Vessel Speed Rule Withdrawn

In August of 2022, NOAA proposed a substantial expansion of its “North Atlantic Right Whale Vessel Strike Reduction Rule” that significantly curtailed recreational boating access along the East Coast. Immediately afterward, it became a priority for the marine industry to educate legislators on the negative impact the rule would have on boaters and the boating industry.

As a result of those efforts, MRAA was pleased to report in January 2025 that the National Marine Fisheries Service officially withdrew the proposed rule. The rule would have put in place a 10-knot speed limit on almost the entire East Coast and would have limited access for recreational anglers and boaters while potentially shuttering marine retailers and businesses in coastal communities along the Eastern Seaboard.

Concurrently with its education efforts, the marine industry invested significant time and resources developing technological solutions to support the conservation of endangered marine mammals like the North Atlantic Right Whale. Currently, there are a variety of promising technologies including satellite imaging, passive acoustic monitoring, infrared sensors, and more that can help detect the Right Whale and provide important data to boaters. MRAA and the recreational boating industry at large plan to build on previous work toward technological solutions, with the goal of giving mariners the ability to make boating decisions based on real-time location data for marine mammals.





## Hanson-Milone Safe Boating Act Signed into Law

After more than a decade of advocacy and legislative effort, the Hanson-Milone Safe Boating Act was signed into law by Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey, marking a monumental step in improving boating safety across the state. The legislation established a mandatory boater education program, requiring all boat operators in the Commonwealth to obtain a boater safety certificate. With its passage, Massachusetts joined 45 other states in mandating boater education, a move celebrated by the recreational boating community.



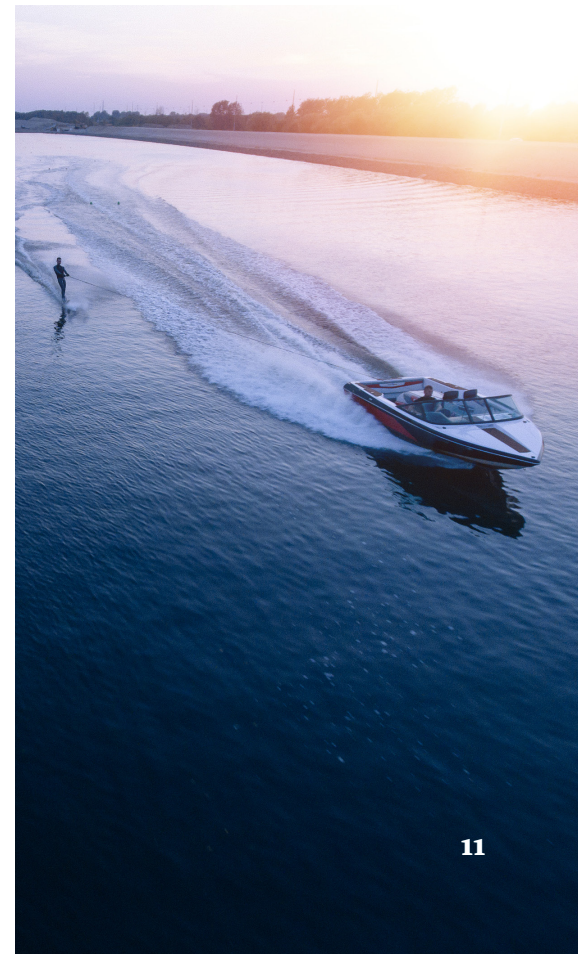
The MRAA, alongside organizations including the Massachusetts Marine Trades Association (MMTA), the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), BoatUS and the Association of Marina Industries (AMI), played a pivotal role in advocating for the legislation. The combined efforts demonstrated the recreational boating industry's commitment to safety and were instrumental in helping the legislation get past the finish line.

The act pays tribute to the lives and legacies of David Hanson and Paul Milone. Hanson, who tragically died in a 2010 boating accident at the age of 20, was remembered as a young man dedicated to the safety of others, aspiring to become a firefighter. Milone, who passed in 2020 at age 74, served as a harbormaster for 29 years and taught more than 30,000 people boating safety throughout his career. Their families, who were instrumental in advocating for the act, joined state officials at the Discover Boating New England Boat Show to commemorate the signing.

## Texas Boating Bill Protects Consumers, Retailers

MRAA, along with a coalition of recreational boating organizations, commended the state of Texas for enacting Senate Bill 1267, signed into law on May 27 by Gov. Greg Abbott. This bipartisan legislation, classified as “Uniform Certificate of Title for Vessels Act” (UCOTVA), made important changes to Texas boat titling, registration and branding systems, ultimately delivering significant benefits to consumers, law enforcement, marine retailers and the industry at large.

The bill introduced comprehensive reforms to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code. It aims to enhance transparency, combat fraud and streamline the process of buying and selling boats in Texas. Furthermore, the policies will provide more protections for consumers and marine retailers, making it harder for bad actors to hide the vessel history and deter theft. Ultimately, this increases transparency in the marketplace. Texas is the seventh jurisdiction to enact UCOTVA provisions.



## Minnesota Lead Key Ban Pushed Back

The MRAA, as part of the Unlock Minnesota Coalition, comprised of Minnesota-based businesses, worked together to shepherd a provision through the legislative process that relaxed the state's previously enacted lead key ban.

The MRAA worked with our Minnesota-based members to highlight the impact the ban would have on the recreational boating industry. Keys are traditionally made of brass but include small amounts of lead for strength. With the prospect of these keys being banned entirely in Minnesota, the recreational boating industry needed additional time to find workable alternatives.

The provision delayed implementation of the ban until July 1, 2028. Ultimately, it gives the recreational marine industry, and others, much needed time to research, develop and deploy alternatives that comply with the statute.



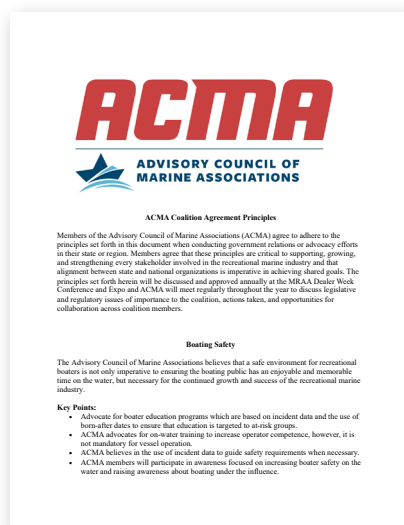
MRAA's VP of Industry Relations, Mike Davin [Right]

## ACMA Approves New Coalition Agreement

The Advisory Council of Marine Associations (ACMA) approved a new Coalition Agreement in 2025, establishing a set of principles to which members of the coalition will adhere. ACMA comprises both state and national marine trades associations, and the newly approved agreement ensures that all ACMA members agree on policy priorities to facilitate collaboration and coordination on advocacy efforts nationwide.

Previously, ACMA met annually to approve a detailed set of policy resolutions; however, the group has adopted a Coalition Agreement to create a more durable, long-term solution that provides a more robust framework for the coalition and its members. Unlike policy resolutions, which address specific issues with specific policy prescriptions, the new coalition agreement aims to provide a comprehensive set of principles to guide long-term cooperation and strategic decision-making.

The full coalition agreement is posted at [MRAA.com](https://mraa.com).



ACMA meeting at Dealer Week 2024 in Orlando, Florida.



## Dealer Advocate Newsletter

A new advocacy newsletter officially rolled out in 2025. The newsletter keeps dealers updated on legislation, regulation and more regarding recreational boating policy from states and the federal government. The goal of the newsletter is to keep MRAA members in the know and to facilitate more collaboration to ensure more effective advocacy.

If you would like to sign up for the newsletter, go here: [MRAA.com/advocacy-updates](https://MRAA.com/advocacy-updates)



## Small Business Legislative Council Fly-in

The MRAA Government Relations Team joined the 2025 Small Business Legislative Council (SBLC) fly-in in Washington to discuss small business issues impacting recreational boat dealers and potential regulatory hurdles in the future.

Mike Sayre, MRAA Government Relations Director, and Chad Tokowicz, MRAA Government Relations Manager, discussed pressing issues impacting the organization and its members. Discussions centered on maintaining tax incentives that encourage investment and growth and securing long-term tax certainty for pass-through businesses. With key tax provisions set to expire at the end of 2025, the SBLC emphasized the importance of policies that provide stability and parity for small businesses, ensuring they remain competitive in an evolving economic landscape.

“The Small Business Legislative Council has been an incredible resource for MRAA and our members,” said Sayre. “The expertise and support from SBLC on complex tax and related policy issues means MRAA members are having their concerns heard at the highest levels of government.”

The MRAA joined the SBLC in 2024 to increase its focus on issues impacting small businesses like taxes and regulatory requirements. The fly-in also builds stronger relations at the White House and on Capitol Hill in advance of large-scale tax legislation under discussion.





*MRAA Staff and Board Representatives at the American Boating Congress in Washington D.C., May, 2025. From left to right; Matt Gruhn, MRAA President, Chris Butler, Owner/President Butler Marine, and Joe Lewis, Owner Mount Dora Boating Center.*

## American Boating Congress

Every year, perhaps the most important legislative gathering for boating occurs when the industry comes together in Washington, D.C., for the American Boating Congress (ABC).

The event, hosted by the National Marine Manufacturers Association and industry co-sponsors including MRAA, brings the marine industry's priorities to Capitol Hill for important one-on-one conversations with lawmakers. During the event, MRAA's Government Relations team and members met with elected officials to spotlight key policy issues impacting marine retailers and the recreational boating industry. In 2025, ABC was hosted May 12-14. This year's gathering will be May 4-6, 2026, and MRAA encourages all dealers to attend.







## National Marine Trades Council Annual Conference

The 2025 NMTC Annual Conference was hosted at the Portland Harbor Hotel in Maine. The event brought together marine industry leaders, association representatives and stakeholders from across the country for discussions, presentations and networking. Sessions covered a wide range of topics, including workforce development, industry advocacy, boat show strategies, legislative updates and marketing initiatives. Highlights included workforce-focused presentations from Yamaha and industry insights from Discover Boating. The MRAA held a forward-looking discussion on the future of marine retail. Attendees also explored the impacts of tariffs, regulatory and legislative trends, and shared best practices from state legislative sessions.

## Two Dealers Honored for Commitment to Protecting Access, Advancing Advocacy

MRAA recognized two outstanding dealer advocates during its annual awards luncheon at the 2025 Dealer Week Conference and Expo, presenting the MRAA Dealer Ambassador Award to Tom Whowell of Gordy's Marine and Bob Bense of Superior Boat Repair and Sales.

Presented by MRAA's Government Relations team, the Dealer Ambassador Award recognizes MRAA members who demonstrate an exceptional commitment to advocacy, government relations and protecting the long-term health of the recreational boating industry.



*Bob Bense of Superior Boat Repair and Sales*



*Tom Whowell of Gordy's Marine*



# MRAA Adds New Staff

The MRAA grew in 2025, adding a number of new roles and staff to support members.



## **Ridgeway Addison**

### *Senior Director of Education*

Addison comes to MRAA as an impact-focused learning leader with 25 years of demonstrated success in end-to-end learning design and delivery, training facilitation, and strategic people and project management for top-tier higher education, nonprofit, educational technology, and health insurance organizations. He is known for three things: passion and prowess for innovative and scalable training solutions; a broad learning operations skill set; and cross-functional executive presence and collaboration. Ridgeway is based at MRAA's headquarters in the Twin Cities of Minnesota, where he resides with his family.



## **Luke Feldbrugge**

### *Senior Director of Revenue Operations*

Feldbrugge graduated from the University of St. Thomas with a marketing management degree, started in TV ad sales, then moved into media planning at a Twin Cities agency. From there, he transitioned into 20-plus years of brand, product and content marketing at B2B2C businesses; with accomplishments that included leading the teams that managed the Dairy Queen Cakes national product platform as well as developing programs that helped local businesses with their marketing and sales strategies. In his free time, he enjoys being outdoors: camping, fishing, trail walking and agate hunting.



## **Steven Netsch**

### *Director of Research and Strategic Insights*

Netsch comes to the MRAA with more than a decade of experience leading customer experience and data-driven strategy for White River Marine Group and Bass Pro Shops. He built and managed large research programs, from survey systems and CRM tools to customer-insights initiatives that sharpen strategy and improve loyalty. At the MRAA, he oversees research projects, develops value-added member programs that advance dealership performance, and communicates insights that strengthen the marine industry. Growing up in Okobojo, Iowa, he brings a lifelong love of boating and a passion for helping retailers create memorable experiences.



# Volvo Penta & MRAA Partner in Dealer Development, Training

Volvo Penta and MRAA are working together to increase Volvo Penta's education offerings beyond its already robust library of trainings to help dealerships develop additional competencies.

The collaboration started in early 2025 with the introduction of the Service Management Certification (SMC), built in partnership between MRAA and the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC). The program reinforces a shared commitment to advancing the marine industry by providing dealers with the resources needed to strengthen soft skills and deliver exceptional customer service. New training modules include key topics like time management, communication, onboarding and performance management.



The Service Management Certification program offers comprehensive training in both leadership and operations, ensuring dealers are equipped with a varied skillset beyond technical expertise and knowledge to provide superior customer support.

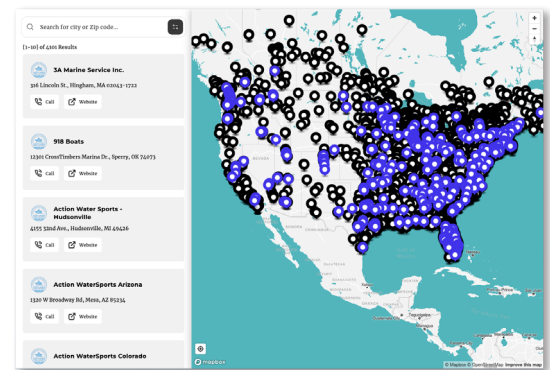
“As one of MRAA’s 12 Strategic Partners, Volvo Penta is dedicated to fostering strong relationships and supporting dealers in their efforts to improve customer satisfaction,” said Magnus Gedda, director of competence development at Volvo Penta. “We encourage our dealer partners to leverage this program to optimize their operations, implement proven service strategies and build long-term customer loyalty.”



# Discover Boating Updates

## Dealer Finder Tool Increases Introductions

Discover Boating's Dealer Finder tool continued driving potential boat buyers to dealer websites in the U.S. and Canada in 2025. In March, it was reported that the number of introductions to dealers from the U.S. Dealer Finder was up 26 percent year over year and Canadian Dealer Finder introductions increased 48 percent since this time last year.



MRAA Certified Dealers get top billing on the Discover Boating Dealer Finder tool. Consumers are shown these dealers first because they can be confident a Certified Dealer will deliver service they can count on — before, during and after the sale.

As today's consumer buying behaviors continue to shift, the Discover Boating Dealer Finder puts the consumer at the helm, allowing them to research, explore and connect with dealers in their area. The tool was recently enhanced to include a fresh look and feel as well as a new geolocation functionality. With this updated feature, users can opt-in to allow location permission, which automatically presents dealers within a 25-mile radius.

Once these potential boat buyers are introduced to local dealers, the dealers are on deck to welcome and nurture them through their boating journey. This is an important step to help build and grow our industry for the future.

Dealers looking to update their listing or be added to the Dealer Finder tool can fill out a form on the Dealer Finder website, and MRAA will reach out to help make changes.

Discover Boating is powered by NMMA and MRAA and focused on expanding the boating market by attracting the next generation of boaters while retaining current boaters.

## Discover Boating Launches New Safe Boating Video Series

Also in 2025, Discover Boating created a series of boating safety videos to educate and connect with the next generation of boaters. These shareable videos were designed to help dealers and other industry stakeholders engage new boaters, whose path to purchase looks very different from previous generations.

Discover Boating and Progressive strategically created short-form videos (in addition to longer form versions) that can be shared on social channels, such as TikTok and Instagram.

“Following the success of our previous three award-winning video series, Discover Boating is thrilled to team up with Progressive again on the launch of this new, five-part series,” said Kevin Williams, NMMA’s vice president of North American marketing. “Since the debut of the first series in 2022, our safe boating videos in collaboration with Progressive have amassed more than 10 million views across Discover Boating’s digital channels, significantly boosting awareness of on-water safety best practices, especially important given the surge of new boaters entering the market in recent years.”

The latest safety video series covers essential safety topics, including:

- Preparing your boat for boating season
- Boating with kids
- Life jackets
- Float plans
- Sound signaling devices

The videos are available to download here: [b2b.discoverboating.com](https://b2b.discoverboating.com)

### How to Boat Safely With Kids



### Life Jacket Safety Essentials



### How to Create a Float Plan



### How to Use Sound Signaling Devices on a Boat





## Discover Boating Partners with Black Boater's Summit in 3 Cities

In its third year, Discover Boating's partnership with the Black Boaters Summit expanded to three new markets home to strong and growing Black boating communities:

- Detroit – Riverside Marina
- New York City – Breezy Pointe Yacht Club
- Washington, D.C. – The Yards Marina

The Black Boaters Summit is an exclusive, RSVP-only lifestyle event designed to celebrate culture, community and the joy of boating. The Summit offers a relaxed, welcoming environment that fosters authentic engagement. Attendees, many of whom are current boat owners, new enthusiasts or prospective buyers, enjoy a full day of on-water activities and conversations about the boating lifestyle.

Prospective buyers, and those looking to take the next step by first renting or chartering, can RSVP for on-water boating experiences. Events conclude with an “Ask Me Anything” panel featuring boating professionals, complemented by live music, local food vendors, boating trivia and more.



## Discover Boating Hosts Marketing Leadership Summit

The 2025 Discover Boating Marketing Leadership Summit was hosted Oct. 6 at The Tampa Edition hotel, just ahead of the opening of IBEX. The Summit gathered more than 80 senior-level marketers and decision-makers from NMMA manufacturer members and MRAA dealer members. With a robust speaker line-up, it was a high-impact, full-day event focused on learning and collaboration on marketing strategies to help expand the boating market.

### *Highlights included:*

- Market Expansion Advisory Group members discussed addressing Discover Boating's role in helping to drive industry-wide growth
- Dan Chuparkoff gave a keynote on the power and potential of AI in marketing
- Ipsos shared a first-look preview of new consumer research findings
- A panel discussion focused on attracting mass affluent, experience-driven consumers
- Former McDonald's Chief Marketing Officer Tariq Hassan shared insights on building cultural relevance

Attendees explored the central question: How do we reach the next generation of boaters — and expand the market before it's too late? Throughout 2026, NMMA and MRAA will continue sharing key learnings and go-forward strategies to help position the industry for growth. In the months ahead, expect to see a collection of resources designed to keep the conversation going and put insights into action.



Keynote speaker Dan Chuparkoff on the power & potential of AI in marketing. Image provided by Discover Boating.



## MRAA Launches Boat Brand Partnership Level

Developed specifically for boat brands interested in offering their dealers access to MRAA's world-class educational programming, rather than producing education themselves, MRAA's Boat Brand Partnership is designed to strengthen the dealer-boat brand relationship. By collaborating with MRAA, boat brands gain access to MRAA's proven expertise in evaluating the health of their dealer networks and implementing tailored programs that empower dealers with the resources, insights and skills they need to succeed.

This partnership demonstrates a boat builder's commitment to fostering trust, cooperation and mutual success with its dealers.

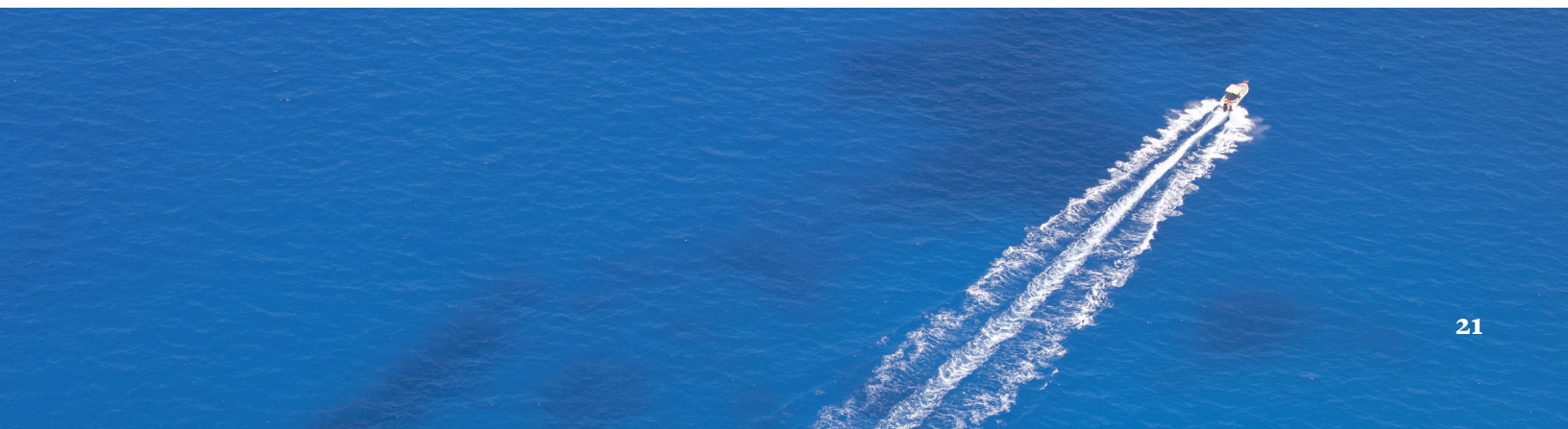
2025 Boat Brand Partners Included: MasterCraft, Regal Boats, Skier's Choice, and Viaggio.

**MasterCraft**

**REGAL**

**SKIER'S CHOICE**

**VIAGGIO**







# MRAA Launches 2026 Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program

In July, MRAA formally launched its 2026 model year Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program. MRAA's Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program provides a platform for deepening the important conversations dealers and manufacturers must have to find success and drive better customer experiences.

Before launch, MRAA fielded a four-month pilot program of this Scorecard Program over the winter, including 12 brands from the Correct Craft and Malibu, Inc. boat brand families. Based on feedback from those brands, MRAA made several updates and refinements to the formal Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program. The pilot program captured insights from more than 175 dealerships related to their satisfaction with manufacturer performance in the relationship, ranging in topics from product quality to marketing and promotions programs and satisfaction with the manufacturers' reps.

"Particularly with the way that our market has slowed over the last couple years, there has never been a more important time to foster critical conversations between dealers and manufacturers, and this program offers a standardized, turnkey approach to doing just that," explains Matt Gruhn, MRAA President. "Based on dealer feedback from the pilot program, we have already seen boat brands make adjustments to improve their dealer relationships and customer experiences. This will help them strengthen their go-to-market strategies, which is exactly the reason we launched the MRAA Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program."

Based on MRAA's comprehensive research, as well as detailed insights and direction from dealers and manufacturers, MRAA created separate dealer and manufacturer scorecards, each featuring 10 customized performance categories. The scorecard surveys, which are distributed electronically and compiled by MRAA, are designed to deepen the conversation between dealers and manufacturers with a focus on improving the overall customer experience. Participating manufacturers receive comprehensive monthly reports that compare their results to industry aggregates and offer insights into areas of opportunity.

To learn more about MRAA's Dealer-Manufacturer Scorecard Program, visit [MRAA.com/scorecards](https://MRAA.com/scorecards)

# NMMA & MRAA Create Market Expansion Advisory Group

In response to a concerning slowdown in new boat sales and shifting consumer behavior, the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) and MRAA joined forces to launch a Market Expansion Advisory Group. This initiative united marketing leaders from across the marine industry to chart a unified strategy for growing boating participation and sales.

Market Expansion Advisory Group members were hand-selected for their marketing leadership, industry expertise and understanding of consumer behavior. Advisory Group members included:

- Thomas Bates, Chief Revenue Officer, Correct Craft
- Lauren Beckstedt, Chief Marketing Officer, Brunswick
- Bryce Brown, Owner, MasterCraft Colorado
- Abbey Heimensen, Vice President of Marketing, MarineMax
- Amber Holm, CMO, Winnebago Industries & Board Member, GoRVing (RVIA)
- Victor Gonzalez, CMO, Sportsman Boats
- Rob Parmentier, CEO, Sailfish Boats & NMMA Board Liaison
- Bryan Seti, GM, Yamaha Watercraft & National Sales & Marketing, G3 Boats

The advisory group's work continues into 2026. Look for multiple opportunities in 2026 for updates on the group's findings and strategic direction.





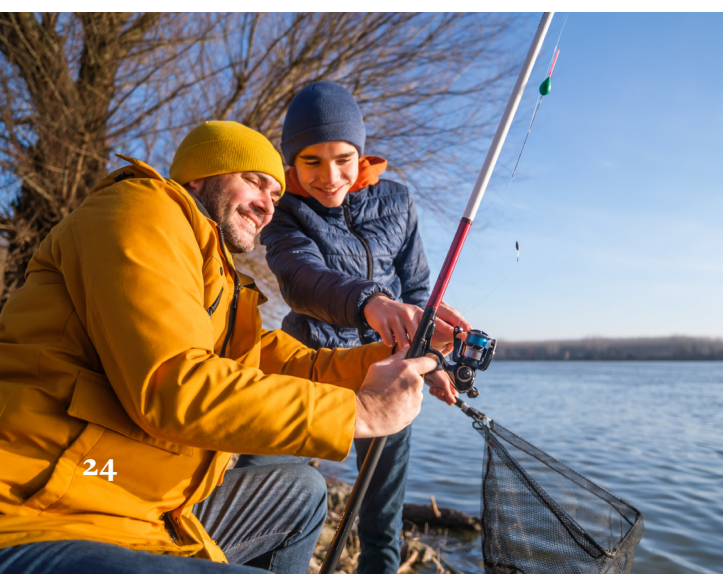
# Data Shows Record High Fishing Participation Reached in 2024

Data from the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF) 2025 Special Report on Fishing showed that in 2024, 57.9 million Americans ages 6 and up took to the nation's waterways to enjoy recreational fishing, an all-time high 19 percent of the U.S. population.

Data also continued to underscore the critical importance of introducing fishing at a young age. Eighty-five percent of current fishing participants fished before the age of 12, but participation rates fell sharply after a child turned 18, and specifically female youth quit fishing at an 11% higher rate than male youth.

According to RBFF's report, spending time with family and friends was a key driver for new anglers. Many new anglers also reported that being in the great outdoors and relaxation inspired their first fishing trip. In addition to these results, the report provided a comprehensive look at the state of fishing participation in the U.S.:

- **5.1 million** Americans tried fishing for the first time in 2024, representing 9 percent of total participants, up from 7 percent in 2023.
- More than **43 million** Americans ages 6 and over went freshwater fishing in 2024, holding steady for the third consecutive year.
- After hitting 15 million anglers for the first time in 2023, saltwater fishing participation grew slightly to **15.1 million** in 2024.
- For the second year in a row, fly fishing topped **8 million** participants.
- **21.3 million** women went fishing in 2024, the highest number of female participants on record.
- **36.7 million** men went fishing in 2024, the highest number of male participants on record.
- More than **5.5 million** Black Americans ages 6 and over fished in 2024, the highest number since activity tracking began in 2007.
- Hispanic fishing participation increased by over 3 million in a decade, increasing from 3.3 million in 2014 to **6.6 million** in 2024.



# MRAA Launches Sales Leadership Certification for Marine Dealerships

In October, MRAA launched its latest Position-Specific Certification: Sales Leadership Certification. Sales Leadership Certification (SLC) is a self-paced online training program that teaches marine dealership sales leaders how to coach, motivate and lead high-performing teams.

The MRAA recommends SLC enrollment to general managers, sales leaders and owners seeking to sharpen leadership impact, as well as any sales professional who wants a recognized step toward a leadership role.

“We are thrilled to announce the launch of our Sales Leadership Certification. Deliberately crafted with direct feedback from dealers – the stakeholders who benefit most – this program is purpose-built to transform sales managers into exceptional leaders,” said Stevie Cook, MRAA Certification Manager. “By equipping them with mastery in coaching, process and communication; Sales Leadership Certification will improve both current performance and strengthen dealerships to handle whatever comes next.”

## Sales Leadership Certification Provides:

- Practical frameworks to coach, motivate and lead day-to-day sales execution.
- Flexible modules that fit the realities of dealership schedules.
- Skills, templates and processes for leading a diverse sales team.
- A clear pathway for sales professionals ready to step into leadership.

“The Sales Leadership Certification was designed to give marine sales leaders a clear pathway to elevate their skills, inspire their teams and strengthen dealership performance,” says Bernie DeGraw, MRAA Senior Education Developer. “By focusing on practical tools and proven processes, this program empowers leaders to create long-term success for both their dealerships and their customers.”







# MRAA President Matt Gruhn Receives William B. Otto Award

Matt Gruhn, MRAA President, was honored by the National Marine Lenders Association with the 2025 William B. Otto III Marine Industry Service Award, recognizing his outstanding vision, leadership and unwavering dedication to advancing the marine industry.

The William B. Otto Award, established in 2002 by Global Marine Insurance Agency, celebrates individuals whose leadership has driven meaningful innovation and positive change across the recreational marine industry. The award was presented to Gruhn during the NMLA's 45th Annual Marine Lending Conference in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Gruhn, who in 2025 celebrated his 14th year as MRAA President, is the 14th recipient of the award.





# MRAA Launches ‘Dealership of the Future’ Task Force

In December, MRAA announced the formation of a “Dealership of the Future” Task Force, a multi-stakeholder initiative designed to confront the rapidly intensifying forces reshaping the marine retail business model and to provide dealers with a clear roadmap for long-term success.

The group was created at a pivotal moment for the marine industry, as dealers face a convergence of challenges unlike any in recent history. Consumer expectations have shifted dramatically. Technology has advanced at a pace that outstrips industry adoption. Operational complexity continues to grow. Service demands are rising. Product pricing has escalated faster than income levels. And the traditional retail model, which was built in an analog era, is struggling to meet the needs of the modern boating consumer.

The Task Force was formed after months of research and industry dialogue, during which several core priorities have been developed. Over the coming year, the Dealership of the Future Task Force will develop and release a structured series of insights, frameworks, and recommendations for dealers and manufacturers. This roadmap will be supported by MRAA research, educational programming and direct collaboration with the Task Force members, MRAA’s Board of Directors, the MRAA Educational Foundation and MRAA’s Strategic Partners.

The MRAA Dealership of the Future Task Force includes representatives from dealerships, manufacturers, partner members and MRAA staff.

## MRAA’S DEALERSHIP OF THE FUTURE TASK FORCE



**Ridgeway Addison**  
MRAA



**Jeremy Anderson**  
Walstrom Marine



**Thomas Bates**  
Correct Craft



**Bob Bense**  
Superior Boat Repair



**Ellen Bradley**  
Discover Boating



**Bryce Brown**  
MasterCraft Colorado



**Stevie Cook**  
MRAA



**Matt Gruhn**  
MRAA



**Jani Gyllenberg**  
Marine Connection



**Jeff Haradine**  
Barletta Boats



**J Hurless**  
Reeder-Trausch Marine



**Jerrod Kelley**  
MRAA



**Ryan Kloppe**  
Lightspeed



**Joe Lewis**  
Mt. Dora Boating Ctr.



**Joe Martin**  
BoatJunkie Sales & Svc.



**Steven Netsch**  
MRAA



**Jason Nierman**  
Rollick



**Eric Smith**  
Colorado Boating Ctr.



**Kim Sweers**  
FB Marine Group



**Liz Walz**  
MRAA







# Dealer Week Grows Attendance and Exhibits

More than 1,400 industry participants came together to learn, collaborate and “Prepare for What’s Next” at Dealer Week 2025 in Tampa, Fla.

The conference brought a lot of firsts. MRAA hosted our largest collection of exhibits to date, spanning the Expo Hall, on-water demos, and the brand-new “New to Marine Showcase.” We also introduced a three-day F&I Workshop, held our first Networking Reception for Women, and unveiled two new MRAA Educational Foundation scholarships at the Awards Luncheon.



# Thank you to all the MRAA Partners Who Supported the Association in 2025

## Strategic Partners



## Education Champions



## Boat Brand Partners





# Platinum and Partner Members

<b>700Credit</b>	<b>De Antonio Yachts USA</b>	<b>NCM Associates</b>	<b>Roswell Marine</b>
<b>Alera Marine Group</b>	<b>Dealer Rock</b>	<b>National Powersports Auctions</b>	<b>Searchshop</b>
<b>AppOne</b>	<b>Defiance Boats</b>	<b>Paradigm Boat Company</b>	<b>Sea-Legs</b>
<b>Avalon Pontoons</b>	<b>Forest River Marine</b>	<b>Performance Brokerage Services</b>	<b>Sea Tow Services International</b>
<b>Bellavia Blatt PC</b>	<b>Grady-White Boats</b>	<b>Pin-Up Marketing</b>	<b>Spectrum Color</b>
<b>Bentley Pontoons</b>	<b>Honda Marine</b>	<b>Premier Marine</b>	<b>Tigé Boats</b>
<b>BoatUS</b>	<b>KICKER Marine Audio</b>	<b>Protective Asset Protection</b>	<b>Trucordia Marine</b>
<b>Boatzon</b>	<b>Line5</b>	<b>Qwest Pontoons</b>	<b>Varatti</b>
<b>Bukaty Companies</b>	<b>MJM Yachts</b>	<b>Relentless Dealer Services</b>	<b>Warbird Marine Holdings</b>
<b>Chaparral Boats/ Robalo Boats</b>	<b>Motility Software</b>	<b>Rollick</b>	<b>ZiiDMS</b>
1st Mate Logistics	Continental Trailers	Indmar Marine Engines	RecFi, LLC
3D Boats	Copper Rock Marketing	Info-Link Technologies	Red Oak Inventory Finance
50 State DMV	Covercraft	iPacket	Renaissance Marine Group
Advancy	CSI – Customer Service Intelligence, Inc.	Innovative Dealer Services, Inc.	Ring Power
AI Boats	CWR Wholesale Distribution	J.D. Power	Seabob
AlumaCraft Boats	Dealer Pay	Kenect	SeaDek
American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC)	Dealer Spike	Koch Companies	ServiceGuard Systems, Inc.
American Boating	Dealership Performance 360 CRM	Lahzo	Sheffield Financial, a division of Truist Bank
Amplified People Solutions	Delv Media	Leavitt Great West Insurance	ShoreHitch
ANA Bookkeeping	Digital Power Solutions	Lippert	Skylon Sports
Anthem Marine	DockMaster Software	Liqui Moly Marine	Solas Science & Engineering Co.
Aqua Finance	Drive Outdoors	Locally	SpeedPro Norcross
Aqua Lily Pad	Dr. Shrink	Machinio Corp.	Speedydock Software
Ascent Dealer Services	DuraLift Marine	Magic Tilt Trailers	Stacey International
Auto Data Direct	EcoPro Products	Mannix Marketing	Supreme BI
Axos Marine Finance	EH20 Marine Business Solutions	Marine Protections	Suzuki Marine USA, LLC
Bank OZK	Epic Finance, LLC	Marinesource	teamMarine
BH-USA	E&P Marine	Maxima Boats USA	TecNiq
BIT Marine Software	ePropulsion	MDS Brand	The Accounting Guys
Blue Ocean Media House	Everglades Boats	Medallion Bank	The Matt Rack
BMO (Formerly Bank of the West)	Extreme Boats Distributing	Medart Marine	The Stanek Group at Morgan Stanley
Boatbot	ezDrive Thrusters	Merrick Bank	Truist Bank
Boat Outfitters	Fishbrain	Monterey Boats / Blackfin Boats	TruVideo
BoatHistoryReport.com	Garage Composites	National Marine Lenders Association	Ultimar
Boatmate Trailers, LLC	GatorStep	Native Rank Inc.	Unishippers
Boatyard	Gemeco Marine Electronics Specialists	Newcoast	United States Warranty Corp.
Bonsai Media Group, LLC	Genesis Marine Technologies	North River Boats	Veranda Marine
Brand Lab Gear	Gilson	Northstar Marine Insurance	Wake Lending
Brown & Brown Dealer Services	Glasstream Powerboats	Octane Lending	Wet Sounds Inc.
Canopy Financial	Glen Raven, Inc.	Octane Marketing	West Marine Pro
Capone & Associates	Good Sam	OneSource Financial	Winboats DMS
CBIZ	GORIDE Rentals	Outer Armor by Commercial Sewing	Wintron Electronics
Chester River Consulting	Grace Titles	Parker Business Planning	WRS Consultants
Chubb	Granfort Boats	Premier Print Plus	XPEL
Coast Technology	Gtechniq Marine	Priority One Financial Services	Yacht Club Trailers
Comparion Insurance Agency	Herohub	Protomet	
Compass Maritime Group	Highfield Boats USA	Radian	
CompX Marine	Impel	Ranieri International	

\* Names in bold are Platinum Partners