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BOATS BEGIN

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**2016 INTERNATIONAL BOATBUILDERS' EXHIBITION & CONFERENCE ATTRACTS OVER  
6,000 MARINE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS TO TAMPA**

**BROOKLIN, ME, October 12, 2016** – Last week, more than 6,000 marine industry professionals gathered for the 26<sup>th</sup> [International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference \(IBEX\)](#) in Tampa, Florida, before Hurricane Matthew hit the Southeast. IBEX, the marine industry's largest technical trade event in North America, was a sold out show and drew marine industry professionals from around the globe to learn about and explore the newest in marine innovation from 556 exhibiting companies, covering over 118,000 square feet of exhibit space, occupying two trade show floors and in-water exhibits.

"We are happy to hear reports from a lot of our exhibitors that despite Hurricane Matthew limiting hours on the final day and travel for many, IBEX was a success, delivering big business for the boating industry to thousands of marine professionals. The show was buzzing throughout the first two days, and there was definitely a sense of excitement and enthusiasm surrounding the number of exhibitors and new products, the innovation and technology on display, and the quality of the education throughout the show and on the docks," said Anne Dunbar, IBEX Show Director.

"In spite of the effects of Hurricane Matthew, IBEX produced strong results for exhibitors and attendees. The positive spirit on the floor of the show is a strong positive indicator that the industry is doing very well," echoed Thom Dammrich, NMMA president. "As boat sales continue to increase, and we see wage growth, growing disposable income and consumer spending, strengthening in the housing market, and interest rates low, the future is bright for the boating industry and IBEX."

The event kicked off on Tuesday with over 700 marine professionals attending the Industry Breakfast, which opened with a State of the Industry by Thom Dammrich, President of NMMA. Kevin Harrington of Shark Tank fame delivered the keynote at the Breakfast, which focused on the importance of digital marketing to reach millennials. The breakfast also included the [Innovation Awards' presentation](#); the [NMMA Hall of Fame](#) awards, honoring Bob Menne of Premier Marine and Vic Porter of Formula Boats; the Mel Barr Award, presented to Johnny Thomerson, National Sales Manager at Lenco Marine; and the Boating Industry Mover & Shaker Award, presented to Bill Yeargin, President and CEO, Correct Craft.

During the three-day event, there were 57 education seminars which were exceedingly well attended. More than 500 marine professionals heard from nearly 100 industry speakers who shared their insights on the most pressing topics facing the industry. One of the seminars focused on *EPA Boatbuilder Residual Risk Regulations*, which was attended by a strong group of manufacturers. In addition Kevin Ritz of ABYC delivered four terrific dockside Seminars and the NMMA teamed up with Discover Boating and agency partner, OLSON who presented research on *How to Win with the First-Time Boat Buyer*.

Hundreds of new products were introduced during the event, including 85 that we nominated for Innovation Awards. Fifteen products were chosen by editors for the Pitch the Press Program including Barnacle Zapper's UltraSonic Anti-Fouling System; Blue Gas Marine's Burn Natural Gas with Outboard; Clarion's CMS4 Marine Source Unit; Dometic's Sea Xchange Water Maker; EntraTech System's Auto Sig Smart Fuel System; Fusion's Stereo Active; Garmin's Virb Ultra 30 Action Camera; Reverso Pump's Outboard Flushing System; Surhold's One Bucket; Transducer Direct's Wireless Pressure Transducer; Turning Point Propeller's Aegis Prop; UFLEX's ' NaviTech Power Steering; Trivantage's Aqualon Edge Boat Cover; and VectorPly Corporation's Toughened Carbon Double Bias.

"IBEX was an excellent show for us, we met with a very impressive list of potential customers and even though many people had to leave early, we were thrilled with the quality of the audience we met with on the first two days," said Keli Wynn, Senior Manager, BoatTrack.

"The well-organized convention was a great fit for us and we made many new contacts who understood our product and are excited to work with us," said Aaron Gregg, Shockwave Shock Mitigation Seating.

The 2017 IBEX is scheduled to take place at the Tampa Convention Center, September 19 – 21, in Tampa, FL USA. For more information, please visit [www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com).

### **About the International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference (IBEX)**

**The 2016 IBEX** ([www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com)), owned and produced by *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine and the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). *Professional BoatBuilder* ([www.proboat.com](http://www.proboat.com)), a boatbuilding-industry trade magazine, was first published in 1989 in response to a growing need for a dedicated forum for those working in design, construction, and repair and has a worldwide readership exceeding 24,000. **The National Marine Manufacturers Association** ([www.nmma.org](http://www.nmma.org)) is the leading trade organization for the North American recreational boating industry. NMMA member companies produce more than 80 percent of the boats, engines, trailers, marine accessories and gear used by millions of boaters in North America. The association serves its members and their sales and service networks by improving the business environment for recreational boating including providing domestic and international sales and marketing opportunities, reducing unnecessary government regulation, decreasing the cost of doing business, and helping grow boating participation. As the largest producer of boat and sport shows in the U.S., NMMA connects the recreational boating industry with the boating consumer year-round.

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