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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **CONNECT WITH THE MARINE INDUSTRY AT IBEX**

### ***International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference Offers Networking Events to Boost Attendees' Experience***

**TAMPA, FL, August 14, 2018** – This year, the 28th International BoatBuilders' Exhibition & Conference (IBEX), held October 2-4 at the Tampa Convention Center, will not only offer an elevated educational program and a wide variety of exhibitions from around the world, but will also give visitors the chance to participate in a number of social and entertainment special events throughout the week. These events are in addition to live and ongoing activities such as Designer Row, the Innovation Way, the Electronics Pavilion – Connected by NMEA 2000, and the IBEX Docks and Outdoor Exhibits.

#### *Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>*

-Between 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., media partner *Soundings Trade Only* presents the *TradeTalks Roundtable Panel & Reception: The Future of the Marine Aftermarket* in the Marriott Tampa Waterside Ballroom, 700 S. Florida Ave, Tampa, Florida. This lively discussion will cover the changing landscape of the marine industry aftermarket, including ownership of companies, brands, and retailers; impact of technology; e-commerce; and the crossover between the RV and marine industries. Panelists include Ron Japinga, CEO and president of Guitar Center, Colin Puckett, head of seller marketing at Amazon Business, and Tom Schuessler, president of Land 'N' Sea Distributing, among several others.

-From 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the CAMLS Center at 124 S. Franklin Street, 14 boat designers will present their designs at *Sparks!: An Inspirational Night of Boat Design Concepts*, powered by PechaKucha. Each presenter will present their boat design concept with the limitations of just 20 slides and 20 seconds per slide. This networking event is sponsored by the Sparks! Group and Tides Marine and presented by media partner *Professional BoatBuilder* magazine.

#### *Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>*

-From 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. the annual IBEX Industry Breakfast and Awards Ceremony, will be held at the Tampa Waterside Marriott Hotel, Grand Ballroom. Several prestigious industry awards will be presented, including the National Marine Representatives Association (NMRA) Mel Barr, Boating Industry Movers & Shakers, the IBI Export Excellence Award and the IBEX Innovation Awards. NMMA President Thom Dammrich and best-selling author and motivational business speaker Rich Karlgaard will deliver keynote addresses. The 2018 IBEX Industry Breakfast is sponsored by Tides Marine Inc., Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF), Interlux Yacht Finishes, AWLGRIP North America, and Unified Purchasing Group.

-Beginning at 6 p.m. exhibitors and visitors can join the Opening Night Party at The Sail Pavilion to celebrate IBEX's opening day. Located just outside of the convention center, attendees can spend the evening enjoying drink specials, live entertainment, and food trucks.

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*Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>*

-In the Tech Talk Theater, 3rd Floor Exhibit Hall, see live product presentations of the latest innovations in the marine industry with IBEX Product Pitches between 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. These exciting presentations by exhibiting companies last two minutes with a one-minute Q&A for press and buyers.

-At 1:00 p.m., walk down the seminar hallway to participate in or watch IBEX's first-ever Vacuum Bagging Challenge. Teams of two will go head-to-head to get the tightest vacuum seal on a balloon without popping it. Winners will receive prizes and participation is free. Email Sarah Devlin, IBEX Education Director, to register for the challenge or for more information: [sarah@ibexshow.com](mailto:sarah@ibexshow.com).

-Complete the day with Happy Hour in the Exhibit Halls between 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. IBEX welcomes all industry professionals to peruse the exhibitions with exhibitor-hosted drinks and hors d'oeuvres.

Additionally, throughout the week, young professionals will have the opportunity to learn about, join, and meet others in Marine Millennials, an exclusive hub of up-and-comers in the industry who are interested in growth and education. IBEX serves as an industry event for the young professionals in Marine Millennials to meet and create valuable relationships within the marine sector.

"The events and experiences we offer each year at IBEX are designed to educate and connect our visitors and exhibitors in a unique and informal way," said Anne Dunbar, IBEX Show Director. "We work hard to offer events that will appeal to the varied interests of people coming to the show, with the goal of ensuring that IBEX is both educational and enjoyable."

For more information on IBEX 2018, exhibiting companies, interactive exhibit hall floor plans, and more, please visit [www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com). To register, click [here](#).

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

IBEX, Where Better Boats Begin ([www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com)), is the marine industry's largest technical trade event in North America and is powered globally by METSTRADÉ, the world's leading platform and community for professionals in the leisure marine equipment industry. IBEX is owned and produced by the National Marine Manufacturers Association ([www.nmma.org](http://www.nmma.org)) and RAI Amsterdam ([www.rai.nl](http://www.rai.nl)). The 2018 IBEX is scheduled to take place at the Tampa Convention Center, October 2 – 4, in Tampa, FL USA. For more information, please visit [www.ibexshow.com](http://www.ibexshow.com).

#### **IBEX 2018 Dates and Times:**

Tuesday and Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## IBEX CAN'T MISS CONFERENCE EVENTS

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