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2010 NMMA Boat Shows Attract Buying Crowds
Exhibitors reporting strong sales at all price points as entry-level buyers return

CHICAGO, January 27, 2010 – Exhibitors at the first nine of this year's National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) boat shows—the New York Boat Show; Kansas City Boat & Sportshow; Nashville Boat & Sportshow; Minneapolis Boat Show; Chicago Boat, RV & Outdoors Show; Baltimore Boat Show; Louisville Boat, RV & Show; Atlanta Boat Show; and, Toronto International Boat Show—are reporting better-than-expected sales and buying crowds with boats selling in all categories. Early reports indicate dealers are writing contracts and selling boats at the shows, as well as walking away with solid sales leads to pursue in the months ahead.

“While many variables contribute to a show's overall attendance – weather, competing events, show dates – at the end of the day, it's not how many people came, it's how many came to buy. This year, with a slight increase in consumer confidence, pent-up demand and the allure of the boating lifestyle, we're seeing buyers return, reminding us that boat shows remain an important sales venue for our industry,” notes NMMA president, Thom Dammrich. “At every one of our shows this year we've seen buyers in both the high-end and entry-level markets, a sign the new boater is returning and that our Discover Boating efforts are making an impact.”

NMMA supports each of its boat shows with a comprehensive local and regional marketing program while leveraging the industry's Discover Boating campaign on a national level. Results this year have exceeded expectations with public relations, interactive and advertising programs creating momentum leading into each show, helping to further promote the affordability of boating and the allure of the boating lifestyle.

What's more, the NMMA Advantage program has delivered thousands of visitors to NMMA boat and sportshow websites to view participating dealer inventories, driving traffic onsite and additional awareness for exhibitors' offerings.

While these are early observations, exhibitors from NMMA boat and sportshows that have taken place this year echo these findings and report healthy sales and buying crowds:

New York Boat Show

“Phenomenal show. I feel sorry for the guys who didn't come,” says David Schmitt from Buster's Marine.

“Attendance has been really great. Good, quality people coming and they're interested in buying at the show. We've surpassed our sales goals already!” reports Bob Sutherland from BRP U.S.

Chicago Boat, RV & Outdoors Show:

“This year's Chicago Boat Show not only exceeded our expectations but was a much needed breath of fresh air. If this show is a barometer for the selling season, it's going to be an exciting year,” notes Dennis Radcliff of Monterey Boats.

Kansas City Boat & Sportshow:

"We are having a great show. NMMA really brought in the buyers this year. We are selling pontoon, fiberglass and aluminum boats," reports Jeff Siems of Blue Spring Marine.

"We had so many hits from NMMA Advantage in late December and early January it was just like summer again! We are able to track hits to our website and know where they came from," says Haleigh Tague, IT manager for Lake Viking Marine.

Nashville Boat & Sportshow:

Ray Anderson of Anderson Marine noted, "Everybody is happier, more upbeat and ready to buy." Anderson sold 20 boats at the show.

Stuart Fraser of Clark Marine Sales echoed, "People were ready to buy again. Last year, people were just looking and didn't want to talk. This year, they were interested, asking questions and ready to buy. I doubled my sales from last year."

Louisville Boat, RV & Sportshow:

"I haven't seen this much traffic in years – it's like old times!" reports Randell Gibson of Kentucky Trophy Fishing.

"I've sold six and have a stack of quotes to follow up for the next two weeks," says Steve Webb of Admirals Anchor.

Baltimore Boat Show:

Andy Lease from Beacon Light Marina, a Grady-White dealer who sold four boats reports, "What a day, we had to pick and choose who to talk to first. Unbelievable traffic. We haven't sold boats here at the show in a couple of years and this year we are!"

T.J. Rose with Marine Max echoes, "Awesome show. Very successful all around and we sold boats!"

Atlanta Boat Show:

"In a word, speechless! We sold nearly every boat on the floor and have several 2010 models on order. We are up nearly 40 percent compared to last year. This was an extremely profitable show for us," explains Scott Cunningham of Singleton Marine Group.

"We are very pleased with the turnout. We sold our two largest boats (391 Meridian and 45 Sea Ray) plus several other models in our line up," says Kyle Johnson of Marine Max.

NMMA boat shows continue through March. A full list of shows can be found online at BoatShows.com.

About National Marine Manufacturers Association: National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) is the leading association representing the recreational boating industry in North America. NMMA member companies produce more than 80 percent of the boats, engines, trailers, accessories and gear used by boaters and anglers throughout the U.S. and Canada. The association is dedicated to industry growth through programs in public policy advocacy, market statistics and research, product quality assurance and promotion of the boating lifestyle. For more information, visit www.nmma.org.

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