

Boating Industry Magazine Announces 2005 Top 100 and Leadership Alliance

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Buying and servicing a boat is about to become a much easier task for consumers around the country thanks to Boating Industry magazine's (www.boating-industry.com) inaugural Top 100 Dealers, a ranking of those marine dealers that are unsurpassed in overall business operations, customer service, marketing and professionalism.



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“While most industry awards are given to those dealers that sell the most boats, our Top 100 program is much more qualitatively focused,” said Matt Gruhn, Editor-in-Chief of Boating Industry, “thereby leveling the playing field for all dealers and directing consumers to those dealers that can best deliver on the dream that boat ownership promises.”

This first-of-its-kind ranking represents an incredibly powerful group of marine dealers. Collectively, they generated more than \$2.6 billion in retail sales, which is nearly 10 percent of the entire \$30 billion marine market. The 2005 Boating Industry Top 100 employ nearly 6,700 people and operate 342 retail locations across North America.

Topping the list at No. 1 is Clearwater, Fla.-based MarineMax, followed by: Skipper Bud's, based in Winthrop Harbor, Ill.; Surfside 3 Marina, Inc., based in Lindenhurst, N.Y.; Crystal-Pierz Marine, based in Brainerd, Minn.; and Prince William Marina, based in Woodbridge, Va. The Top 100 Dealers were honored at a black-tie celebration Thursday, Nov. 10, at the Stardust Hotel &

Casino in Las Vegas.

Boating Industry's editorial staff reviewed more than 300 applications, culled from more than 2,000 nominations. The applications asked both quantitative and qualitative questions regarding all aspects of marine dealer operations.

"The Boating Industry Top 100 will, in short order, become the most coveted award in the marine market," explained Tammy Galvin, Group Publisher for Ehlert Publishing Group's trade magazines. "Marine dealers are on the front line with consumers every day, and this is one way we can help provide much needed benchmarking information for all other dealers to measure themselves against."

To help bring the Boating Industry Top 100 to life, Ehlert Publishing Group, the magazine's parent company, created the Leadership Alliance, an elite group of the marine industry's leading suppliers. These companies were invited to participate because they possess, as one of their corporate values, a true belief in and commitment to raising the bar of professionalism across all marine industry sectors, and particularly for dealers.

The 2005 Leadership Alliance members include: BRP US Inc., GE Commercial Finance, Yamaha, boats.com, Watch Captain, SHURflo and the Marine Retailers Association of America.

Meet the 2005 Leadership Alliance:

Boating Industry magazine, a 76-year-old business-to-business publication owned by Ehlert Publishing Group, a subsidiary of Ventura, Calif.-based Affinity Group Inc., is the most authoritative and widely respected magazine serving the marine industry. Visit <http://www.boating-industry.com>

Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP US, Inc.), Sturtevant, Wis., has been delivering quality recreational experiences for people around the world for more than six decades. In 2001 Evinrude and Johnson outboard engines joined the Bombardier family, and in 2003, after extensive R&D, the company released Evinrude E-TEC, which revolutionized the outboard engine industry. BRP also produces such innovative products and brands as Sea-Doo watercraft and sport boats, Ski-Doo and Lynx snowmobiles, Rotax karts and engines and Bombardier ATVs and utility vehicles. Visit www.evinrude.com

GE Commercial Distribution Finance, Hoffman Estates, Ill., creates customized financing programs to help manufacturers sell more products and dealers stock optimal levels of inventory to drive more sales. With more than 50 years of experience serving the marine industry, GE CDF supports its customers with the industry's most knowledgeable staff and provides a single point of contact for support. GE CDF is a recognized leader in the marine industry because it is dedicated to helping customers improve cash flow and grow their business through an array of financing programs and services. Visit: www.gecommercialfinance.com

Yamaha Marine Group, Kennesaw, Ga., has quickly become a leader in product quality and technology by providing superior value and customer satisfaction. The company has built a strong brand and loyal customer base in the marine market for its outboard engines as well as its Skeeter, Century and G3 boat brands. In 2000, the company introduced its High Pressure Direct Injection technology that swept the top three industry awards for innovation, design and engineering-the marine equivalent of racing's Triple Crown. A more recent award-winning and industry-defining introduction is the F225, the world's first V6 four-stroke outboard. Visit: www.yamaha-motor.com

boats.com has distinguished itself as one of the most effective and convenient pathways for boat dealers, builders and resellers to get in front of boat seekers. More than 1 million people visit boats.com each month to shop more than 100,000 new and used boats by brand, boat type, dealer, region or price. As an Internet marketplace, boats.com is a 24/7 virtual showroom for its dealers and builders. That exposure results in significant numbers of qualified leads and ultimately more boats sold. boats.com is owned by Trader Publishing Co., Virginia Beach, Va. Visit: www.boats.com

Watch Captain, the only Microsoft.Net-based dealer management technology built specifically for the marine industry, makes life easier for dealers by streamlining everyday business processes. Watch Captain, Marion, Mass., technology integrates every aspect of the business, from point-of-purchase and sales functions to service and inventory management. As a result, not only are dealers better informed, they are able to better manage their resources, serve their customers and sell more boats. As a Microsoft Certified Partner, Watch Captain can offer its customers the advantage of Microsoft's continuous research and development as well as the ease of a true Windows-based application. Visit: www.watchcaptain.com

SHURflo has been the marine industry's leading supplier of plumbing products for more the 20 years. Through innovative product design, superior service and close customer relationships, SHURflo's solutions support the growth of the marine industry and ensure the satisfaction of boaters around the world. A commitment to quality is at the heart of SHURflo's success, beginning in the company's state-of-the art product testing and quality control labs at its Cypress, Calif., headquarters. Through lean manufacturing and a continuous process improvement and a team-oriented culture, SHURflo's market and customer responsiveness is unsurpassed. Visit: www.shurflo.com

The Marine Retailers Association of America is the leading not-for-profit organization aimed at promoting the recreational marine industry and the welfare of the marine retailer. The association raises the standards of retailing within the industry, provides its members a common source of information concerning all aspects of marine retailing and serves as the voice within the industry and in Washington regarding issues concerning marine dealers nationwide.

The 2005 Top 100 Dealers:

1 MarineMax Clearwater FL

- 2 Skipper Bud's Winthrop Harbor IL
- 3 Surfside 3 Marina, Inc. Lindenhurst NY
- 4 Crystal-Pierz Marine Brainerd MN
- 5 Prince William Marina Woodbridge VA
- 6 Arrowhead Yacht Club & Marina Ketchum OK
- 7 Slalom Shop Boats and Yachts Lewisville TX
- 8 Russo Marine Medford MA
- 9 Village Marina & Yacht Club Eldon MO
- 10 Sail & Ski Centers Austin TX
- 11 Thunder Marine St. Petersburg FL
- 12 H&S Yacht Sales/Southwestern Yacht Sales San Diego CA
- 13 Port Harbor Marine South Portland ME
- 14 Parks Marina Okobojo IA
- 15 Gordy's Lakefront Marine, Inc. Fontana WI
- 16 Seattle Boat Co. Seattle WA
- 17 Lakeside Marine Inc. Lakeside OH
- 18 Buckeye Marine Bobcaygeon ON
- 19 Bassett Boat Co. Springfield MA
- 20 Clark Marine Manchester ME
- 21 Woodard Marine, Inc. Hydeville VT
- 22 Boats Incorporated Niantic CT
- 23 Strong's Marine, LLC Mattituck NY
- 24 Midwest MasterCraft Crystal MN
- 25 Action Water Sports Hudsonville MI
- 26 Comstock Yacht Sales and Marina Brick NJ
- 27 Hampton Watercraft & Marine Hampton Bays NY
- 28 Hobby Lobby Marine Toms River NJ
- 29 Schock Boats Newport Beach CA
- 30 Duchow's Boat Center Oconomowoc WI
- 31 JOA, LLC Marietta GA
- 32 Apopka Marine, Inc. Inverness FL
- 33 Lockwood Marine, Inc. Townsend GA
- 34 Ivancic Marine, Inc. Cleveland OH
- 35 Staten Island Boat Sales, Inc. Staten Island NY
- 36 San Diego Sundance Marine San Diego CA
- 37 Baert Marine Inc. Danvers MA
- 38 St. Barts Yachts, Inc. Charleston SC
- 39 George's Marine & Sports Ottawa ON
- 40 YouCorp, Inc. San Benito TX
- 41 Marine USA Inc. Worcester MA
- 42 Boat Town, Inc. Austin TX
- 43 Lynnhaven Marine Virginia Beach VA
- 44 Jefferson Beach Yacht Sales St. Clair Shores MI
- 45 Tri-State Marine Deale MD
- 46 Boatland, Inc. Escondido CA
- 47 Clark's Landing Boat Sales Chester MD
- 48 O'Hara Marine Inc. Brookfield CT
- 49 Marine Connection, Inc. W. Palm Beach FL
- 50 Cannons Marina, Incorporated Longboat Key FL
- 51 Link Recreational Minong WI
- 52 Islamorada Boat Center Islamorada FL

53 Gage Marine Corp. Williams Bay WI
54 Rambo Marine Hazel Green AL
55 Parker Boat Co., Inc. Orlando FL
56 Gone Fishin' Marine, Inc. Dixon CA
57 Lakeside Marine Inc. Harrisburg PA
58 Marine Specialties Sparks NV
59 Kelly's Port Osage Beach MO
60 The Boating Center Crestwood KY
61 D&R Boat World Green Brook NJ
62 Westport Marina Denver NC
63 Reed's Marine Delavan WI
64 Chatlee Boat & Marine Sanford NC
65 Silver Lake Marine Silver Springs NY
66 Onekama Marine Onekama MI
67 American Marine and Motorsports Super Center Shawano WI
68 Liquid Sports Marine Orlando FL
69 Texas Marine Beaumont TX
70 Walker's Marine & Yacht Sales Marco Island FL
71 Legendary Marine Destin FL
72 Dan's Boats St. Peters MO
73 Walstrom Marine Harbor Springs MI
74 Short's Marine, Inc. Millsboro DE
75 Marine Center of Indiana Indianapolis IN
76 Gulf Coast Marine, Inc. Corpus Christi TX
77 Cobalt Boats of Atlanta Buford GA
78 Boat And Motor Superstores Palm Harbor FL
79 Bayside Marine Corp. Duxbury MA
80 White's Marine Center Casper WY
81 Shipyard Marine Inc. Green Bay WI
82 Custom Marine Statesboro GA
83 MacCallum's Boathouse, Inc. Epsom NH
84 Omaha Marine Center Omaha NE
85 Sima Marine Eastlake OH
86 Glenn Marine Family Boating Centers, Ltd. Northport NY
87 Sportsman's Outfitter & Marine, Inc. Lee's Summit MO
88 Jackson Marine Sales, Inc. North East MD
89 East Coast Flightcraft, Inc. Middleton MA
90 Spicer's Boat City Houghton Lake MI
91 Mount Dora Boating Center Mount Dora FL
92 Olympic Boat Centers Bellevue WA
93 Erickson Marine Hastings MN
94 Austin Boats and Motors Austin TX
95 Bohner Lacefield Marine, Inc. Madera CA
96 Hammer's Ski & Marine, Inc. Petaluma CA
97 Pine Crest Marine, Inc. Cedar Lake IN
98 Sunrise Marine, Inc. Mary Esther FL
99 Lodder's Marine Sales, Inc. Fairfield OH
100 Marshall's Marine, Inc. Lake City SC

More information: www.boating-industry.com

News issued by: Boating Industry magazine

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Original Story ID: (1029) :: 2005-11-1120-001

Original Keywords: Ehlert Publishing Group, Boating Industry, magazine, Matt Gruhn, Tammy Galvin, marine dealer operations, MarineMax, 2005 Top 100, Leadership Alliance, boats, boating, marine market, BRP US Inc., GE Commercial Finance, Yamaha, boats.com, Watch Captain, SHURflo and the Marine Retailers Association of America Boating Industry magazine