

**2008 Michigan State University
Consumer Boat Show Survey**

Highlights

Based on the success and findings from our 2007 MSU survey, we elected to survey our attendees at all 2008 winter shows. Over 20,000 individuals responded and we now have a tremendous data base of consumer opinion that will help guide our efforts to improve NIMMA boat shows and sportshows.

Attached is the detailed combined quantitative all-show report for your perusal and some general observations and conclusions by Dr. Ed Mahoney of MSU.

Some highlights are:

- Reasons why people attend a boat show (in descending order):
 - * To view new boat models
 - * For fun
 - * To research boats for a future purchase
 - * To view or purchase boating accessories
 - * To compare boat prices
 - * To get the best price on a boat
- 75% owned a boat the previous year
- 55% agree that attending a boat show is an important part of their buying process (matches a J.D. Powers study)
- 15% intended to buy a boat at the show
- 5% actually bought a boat at the show
- Plan to purchase in the following timeframe:

1 month	3.2%
3 months	9.6%
6 months	14.3%
1 year	32%
more than 1 year	41%
- 65% agree that attending a boat show increases their desire to purchase a boat
- 86% agree that attending a boat show increases their desire to go boating
- 50% went to a show with no intention of buying a boat, but became interested once at the show
- 94% agree that attending a show helps them stay informed about new boats
- 36% agree that after attending a boat show, they tend to buy a boat they saw at the show rather than one they have not seen

- 92% agree that attending a boat show helps them stay informed about boating accessories

- 73% attended a show to view or purchase boating accessories

- 65% agree that after attending a show they will buy accessories they saw at the show rather than ones they have not seen

- 47% spoke with 3-5 dealers at the show

- 49% intend to follow up with a dealer they spoke with at the show

- Annual household income:

\$50k - 79,999	12.9%
\$75k - 99,999	16.4%
\$100k - 149,999	24.4%
\$150k - 199,999	10.7%
\$200k plus	10.2%

- Perception of overall show quality when compared with previous year:

Better	27%
About the same	61%
Worse	12%

- Did the boat show meet/exceed my expectations:

exceeded expectations	14%
met expectations	73%
did not meet my expectations	13%

- If not, why:

the type of boat I wanted wasn't there	45%
the brand I wanted wasn't there	39%
not enough accessories	47%
not enough fishing products	33%

- Likely to attend another boat show this year (not including this show):

no other show	29%
1 show	29%
2 shows	27%
3 shows	11%

Some Conclusions First

1. Boat Shows CONTINUE as an important MARKETING CHANNEL for BOATS and WAY to RECRUIT and RETAIN BOATERS.
1. Boat Shows like other forms of MARKETING are viewed as COSTS and NOT INVESTMENTS when times are BAD.
3. Boat Show Producers may be pressured to MASS MARKET when times are BAD but this would be a major mistake.
4. Boat Shows require a CAST (Producer, Manufacturers, Exhibitors) working together to be SUCCESSFUL.
4. Boat Shows are as much about MARKET SHARE and BRANDING as SELLING.
6. A much higher proportion of the attendees come to the shows thinking about buying a boat than actually buy meaning that 2/3 to 3/4 of the potential buyers go home without purchasing a boat. SELLING IN A DEALERSHIP IS DIFFERENT THAN SELLING AT A SHOW!

Some Conclusions First

7. People who attend shows get MORE interested in buying a new boat as a result of attending and tend to buy brands (boats and dealers) they see at the show and from dealers they talk to at the show. Manufacturers must develop and share BS Branding Strategies with DEALERS.
8. Boat Shows require and understanding of Relationship Marketing and Relationship Building Strategies to Maximize ROI. Too few dealerships have integrated strategies that extend LONG ENOUGH beyond the shows. Many of the attendees have buying horizons that extend more than SIX MONTHS from the shows.
9. Boat shows play important BUT DIFFERENT roles in the PURCHASE PROCESS for boats and DEALERSHIPS and their SALES STAFF need to understand and discern this. SPECIAL SHOW PRICING, NEWEST OF PRODUCT, THE WHOLE 9 YARDS!

10. My Father's Boat Show is but also is NOT MY PREFERRED BOAT SHOW. The VAST MAJORITY OF ATTENDEES ARE SATISFIED... BUT MORE MUST BE DONE to understand and respond to preferences.

11. In addition to selling BOAT SHOWS must continue to be SETTINGS which allow BOATERS to VERIFY and CELEBRATE why they are BOATERS.

12. Most ((85%) of the BOATERS who are attracted to boat are in the demographic sweet spot – ages 35-64.

13. BOAT SHOWS CAN BE ONE WAY TO RE-ATTRACT INACTIVES (E.G., EMPTY NESTERS) AND DROPOUTS AND RECRUIT NON-BOATING MINORITY PERSONS INTO BOATING – GROWTH IN WEALTH!

14. NEW BOAT SHOWS FOR A NEW GENERATION OF BOATERS IS GOING TO REQUIRE A NEW VISION, TARGETING, MARKETING EXPERIMENTATION AND CONTINUUS TINKERING!!

"Before you can inspire with emotion, you must be swamped with it yourself. Before you can move their tears, your own must flow. To convince them, you must yourself believe." – Winston Churchill