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INDUSTRY EXPERTS SHARE INSIDER TIPS FOR BOAT BUYING

Discover Boating Offers Advice for Selecting the Right Boat, Financing and Insurance

Michigan has nearly one million registered boats on file, and ranks in the top five states. With more than 3,308 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, 11,000 inland lakes, and exceptional sportfishing options, it is not surprising that the passion for boating is so strong in Michigan. As thousands of Michigan boaters know why life is better with a boat, others are increasingly curious and are heading to dealerships and boat shows to find the best deals.

"There are a few key points to keep in mind when purchasing a boat and picking the right time of year to buy can be critical," said Detroit Boat Show Manager Van Snider. "First-time boat buyers tend to run into common misconceptions when buying a boat and it's important to do the research to gather as many facts as possible to make the right decision." With boats for every lifestyle and budget on the market, first-time buyers should do their homework before shopping"

Determine what, where and who. When deciding on a boat, ask yourself what you want to do with it, where will you be boating and who will be joining you. Research has shown most people get involved in boating to spend quality time with family and friends and in Michigan you are never more than six miles from a lake or stream and never more than 85 miles from a Great Lake or other navigable body of water.

Do your homework. The best place to shop for boats is a boat show. It is a great source to find out about the types of boats, brands and models that meet your needs. DiscoverBoating.com is an unbiased resource offering tips and information on all boat categories, as well as financing, insurance and a calendar of boat shows. The Detroit Boat Show's Discover Boating Center can do the same.

Find the ideal boat/dealer combination. Select the dealer that goes the extra mile, offering the best deal and ensuring first-rate service after the sale. Depending on the season, ask for a "test drive" to experience first-hand how the boat performs in the water. Like car shopping, test-driving several boat types and sizes will help you make a selection.

Build a budget. According to the National Marine Manufacturer's Association, seventy-four percent of current boat owners have a household income under \$100,000. There are brands and price points to fit individual needs, so determine how much you want to spend before actively looking, so a dealer can recommend models in your price range.

Hone your skills. Complete a boater education course with family members before the boat is launched. Everyone will have more fun with confidence in their abilities as "smart boaters." Boating safety courses are offered by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or the U.S. Power Squadron. Classes are typically free, aside from the cost of materials, and can help reduce boat insurance prices.

Find the Seal of Approval. Prospective buyers should look closely at more than a price tag when shopping for a new boat. Find the NMMA Certified label, which ensures the boat meets strict industry product quality standards. A list of NMMA Certified manufacturers can be found on DiscoverBoating.com.

To find out more, visit www.DiscoverBoating.com or the Discover Boating Display at the Detroit Boat Show. For those interested in learning more about or shopping for a boat, the Detroit Boat Show offers a Discover Boating Center as well as hundreds of boats of all types and sizes to see and buy at great prices. The 52nd annual Detroit Boat Show is February 13-21, 2010. Admission to the boat show is \$12 for adults, children 12 and under are free with an adult, and seniors over 62 receive free admission on Monday. Parking is available at Cobo Center and surrounding lots. **FOR MORE INFORMATION** and discount tickets, visit www.detroitboatshow.net, or call the MBIA at 1.800.932.2628.

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