SCUBA DIVING INDUSTRY

OCTOBER 2024 • PUBLISHED BY CLINE GROUP

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TRAVEL

SAN ANDRÉS ISLAND: READY FOR DIVE GROUPS? ABOARD CALYPSO WITH COUSTEAU'S CAMERAMAN

SPECIAL DEMA ISSUE

EXHIBITOR AND SEMINAR LISTS



BUSINESS EDU

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PHOTO PRO

THE WORLD'S OF CRISTIAN DIMITRIUS & AMOS NACHOUM

TRAINING

THE 4 P's OF SAFETY, SINGLE POINT FAILURES



TRENDS IN DIVE RETAILING, TRAVEL & TRAINING



Feeding whale shark by Mark B. Hatter
taken aboard the Raja Ampat Aggressor liveaboard
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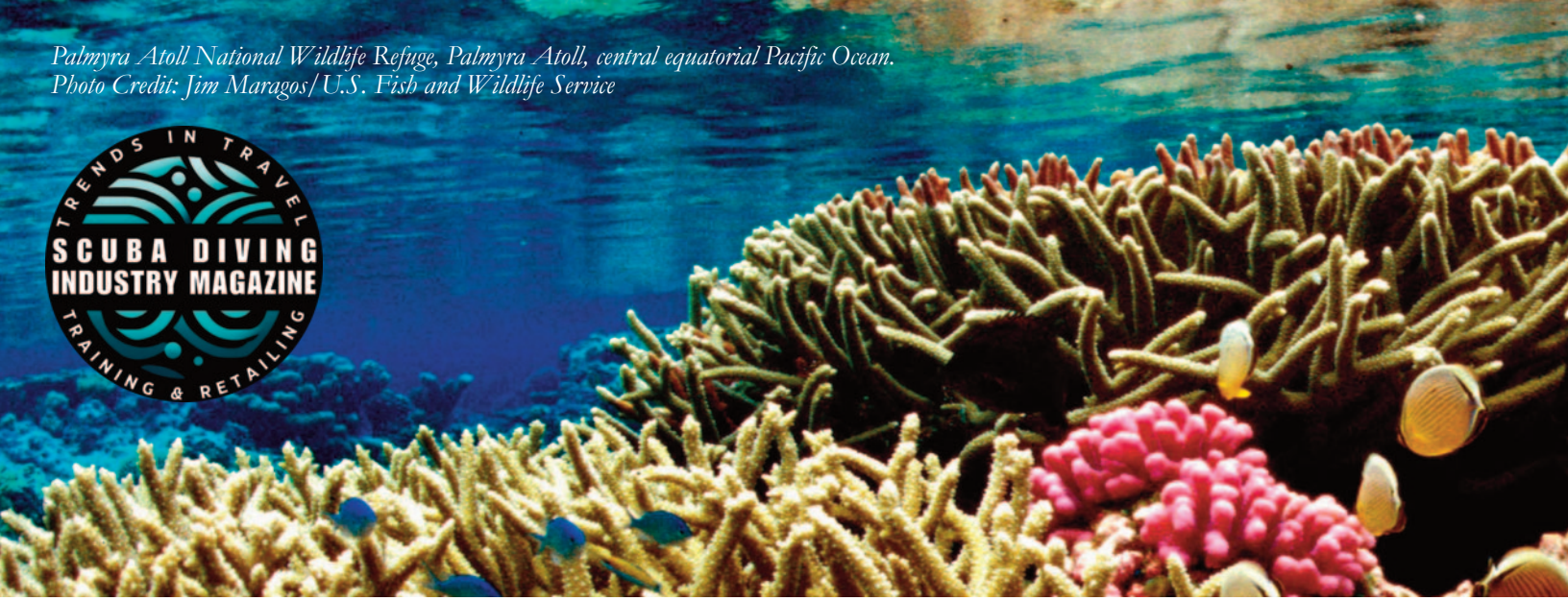
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Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, Palmyra Atoll, central equatorial Pacific Ocean.
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FROM THE PUBLISHER



COME TOGETHER FOR THE ULTIMATE SCUBA DIVING EVENT IN LAS VEGAS

This November 19-22, you have a unique opportunity to join forces with the entire diving community at the biggest scuba diving trade show of the year in Las Vegas. Whether you're an instructor, dive shop owner, equipment manufacturer, dive travel operator, or dive professional, this is your chance to connect with industry leaders, exchange ideas, and grow your business.

The diving world is built on collaboration and a shared passion for the ocean. By coming together at this event, we can collectively shape the future of scuba diving. The trade show will feature cutting-edge equipment demonstrations, workshops led by industry experts, and networking opportunities with like-minded professionals from around the globe. You'll gain insights into the latest trends, innovations, and best practices that can give your business a competitive edge.

Las Vegas, known for its world-class venues, is the perfect backdrop for this gathering. Imagine spending a day immersed in everything scuba-related, from the latest gear to new dive destinations, and then enjoying an evening networking with your peers. The event will foster new collaborations, spark ideas for business growth, and remind us all why we're so passionate about exploring the underwater world.

We will be there in booth 8075, between the Bonaire, Cayman, and Bahamas pavilions. Come by and say hi! We would love to meet you. Patty, Amber, and Britain will be working our booth, plus some of our writers will be dropping by as well.

Mark your calendar for November 19-22 and join us in Las Vegas. Together, we can strengthen our community, elevate our industry, and inspire the next generation of divers. This trade show is more than just an event – it's a celebration of the global scuba diving family coming together. See you at the Show, and if you're already here and reading this on the floor, **welcome to DEMA 2024**! Come by the resource center #8109 at 4pm Tuesday and enjoy our panel disucsion for dive retailers, featuring some of our writers!

William Cline, Publisher

email William

SCUBA DIVING INDUSTRY™ MAGAZINE
OCTOBER 2024 VOL. 1, NO. 10

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Scuba Diving Industry Magazine™: (Print: ISSN 2996-1416, Digital: ISSN 2996-1424) Published monthly by Cline Group LLC, 1740 Airpark Lane, Plano, TX 75093. Printed copies are mailed within the USA to select dive retailers & advertisers. Subscriptions are free to dive professionals & distributed digitally to 165 countries. POSTMASTER send address changes to Scuba Diving Industry Magazine, 1740 Airpark Ln., Plano, TX 75093.

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SAFETY

The Four "P's" of Scuba Diving Safety

– by Dan Orr, President, Dan Orr Consulting

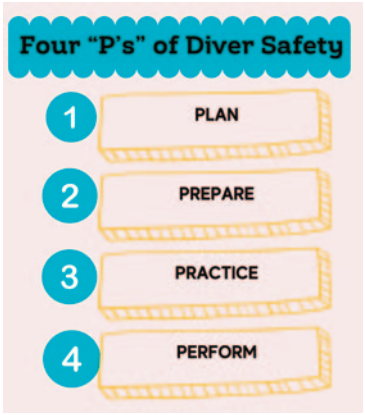


Scuba diving is inherently safe but can be very unforgiving of mistakes. If we can reduce the number of mistakes that divers make, it stands to reason that we may be able reduce the number of accidents and injuries in our sport.

In the diving safety webinars that I offer to the diving community at no charge, one concept I address is what I call "The Four P's of Scuba Diving Safety."

The Four P's of Scuba Diving Safety are:

PLAN: Just about every diver has heard that we need to plan our dives and dive those plans. Planning can be very complicated but an essential component of diving safety. Divers must gather all the information necessary about the dive and the dive site in order to construct a dive plan that reduces risk and, at the same time, maximizes the opportunity to safely enjoy the diving experience. Also, divers need to be aware of the physical characteristics of the specific dive site, maximum possible depth, currents, wave action, visibility, water temperature, and anything else that would be useful in preparing a comprehensive and safe dive plan. The plan should include a discussion of any recall system or procedure that are being used. It is always better to have a unique recall system or procedure so as to not be confused with others in the area. For example, I was diving from a commercial dive boat a few years ago where we were anchored in a very popular dive location. The recall system used by that dive boat was to strike the dive ladder in a series of two strikes continuously to indicate that the divers should surface. Unfortunately, it was the same recall protocol used by other dive vessels nearby. When one of the dive vessels had an emergency and initiated the same recall as a few other vessels in the same location, a couple of dozen divers ascended to the surface making the actual rescue process more complicated. Dive plans are always better when developed along with your diving companions so that everyone is on the same dive plan. The sharing of all aspects of the dive plan with your diving companions including any contingencies is an essential component of dive planning.



Benjamin Franklin said, "Failure to plan, is planning to fail."

PREPARE: When reviewing circumstances surrounding diving accidents, failure to adequately prepare for dives, especially those under potentially challenging conditions, is a significant factor in many diving accidents. Preparation begins long before you arrive at the dive site, dock or pier. Pre-dive preparation includes making sure to have the proper equipment for the dive or dives you plan to make. When I was planning for my first dives on an upcoming expedition to Antarctica, I had to make sure that I had the appropriate equipment to be able to safely dive under some of the most demanding conditions I've ever been exposed to. This included the appropriate exposure protection (dry suit and polar weight undergarment) and a regulator (or, in the case of Antarctic diving protocol, dual regulator systems) that could function properly in water temperatures down to 28º F(2ºC). Not only did I want to make sure that I had all the appropriate equipment for these challenging conditions, but I also wanted to make sure I was familiar with the use of this new equipment under similar conditions. Therefore, I chose to do some preliminary dives under coldwater conditions in the Beagle Channel in Ushuaia, Argentina a few days before my departure for the Antarctic peninsula. I felt it was good to become familiar with the equipment under similar conditions before using the equipment in an extremely remote location where managing a diving emergency would have been extremely problematic. It is always a good idea to take every opportunity to do warm-up dives any time you are using new equipment for the first time, when dives are being done in unfamiliar locations or when you have not been in the water for a long time.

I also include in my pre-dive preparation, an emergency action (or assistance) plan (EAP) with all the information necessary to manage an emergency (diving or non-diving) if something were to occur if medical or emergency services are called for. Besides an EAP, I also make sure

that I have all the necessary emergency equipment including emergency contact equipment (mobile phone, satellite phone, radio), emergency oxygen equipment, first aid supplies and, if necessary, an automated external defibrillator (AED). If I am diving from a commercial dive boat, after bringing my equipment onboard and securing it, I ask the crew to see the emergency oxygen equipment. I want to know that the equipment is capable of delivering 100% inspired oxygen to a diver who may be experiencing a pressure-related diving injury (DCS or AGE). Many years ago, I had the opportunity to dive with some companions onboard a dive boat from Sea Experience (www.seaex.com) in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. The first thing I did when I came onboard his boat was to ask to see the oxygen equipment. It was a DAN Oxygen Unit that I developed when I first started working at DAN in 1991. Their oxygen equipment was in perfect order. Bill, the owner, commented that this was the first time anyone had asked to see that equipment.



Divers practicing in a pool.

PRACTICE: In the February issue, I addressed the concept of skill degradation over time. Skill degradation refers to the loss, decay or deterioration of trained or acquired skills and knowledge after a period of non-use, in our case, non-diving. Skill degradation is a potentially serious issue and certainly problematic in situations where we may not use or practice our skills for extended periods of time. The old adage of "use it or lose it" certainly applies to diving skill degradation.

There has been considerable published research on the evaluation and optimization of methods for maintaining or retraining skilled performance involving deterioration of skill performance in Paramedics, medical students and nurses. For example, when evaluating the retention of Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) skills only 30% passed the skills test at three months and only 14% passed the skills test at twelve months. There is also a significant amount of research on skill degradation in pilots, both civilian and military. These studies involved both emergency procedures (combination of cognitive and psychomotor tasks) and flight control (primarily continuous psychomotor tasks). The results showed that both procedural and control skills deteriorated significantly after one to four months of inactivity.

There are, for example, many parallels between flying and diving. Each require meticulous preparation and a thorough understanding of how to successfully manage situations in an environment that can be very unforgiving. *And, in both flying and diving, it is certainly very bad to run out of air!* International diver training organizations, instructors and dive centers understand the concept of skill degradation and have introduced refresher training courses as an important component of their training regimen.

Divers should maintain their skills at the optimal level to continue safely enjoying scuba diving. Simply diving may not be sufficient to effectively use the complex psychomotor skills necessary to successfully manage emergency situations such as the exchange of breathing gas in an emergency, finding and removing weights or performing a diver rescue. Therefore, frequently practicing these skills is an essential component of diving safety.

Skill practice can come in different forms including practice in a pool or shallow, benign dive location. Practice can also come through something called "static rehearsal" involving a simple review of training manuals, checklists, photographs or videos. Static rehearsal may be good to mentally prepare for diving, but it is far less effective than other forms of practice. A more active form of practice is something called "dynamic rehearsal" which involves practice using the diving equipment divers would be using during a dive. Dynamic rehearsal can take place on a boat deck or shore site before entering the water; in a safe, confined water setting or even on the surface when divers go through the mechanics of skills such as the exchange of breathing gas. Dynamic rehearsal appears most effective for the retention of manual or mechanical skills. Albert Einstein was quoted as saying, "In theory, theory and practice are the same. In practice they are not." Therefore, it could be in the best interest of diving safety to adopt a "dynamic rehearsal" practice regimen.

When I was actively teaching scuba diving (at all levels) and research diving, I would teach what I called "Proper Pre-Dive Procedure." This included all the steps necessary to be completely prepared for a dive before actually entering the water. This included: having a complete emergency action (or assistance) plan, a thorough check of your diving equipment and that of your diving companion, a complete review of the dive plan and contingencies, a review



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of basic hand signals (as there are some people who modify or invent their own hand signals), assemble your diving equipment checking to make sure that everything is configured appropriately. Once you and your diving companion are suited up and ready to dive, we pause and review the mechanical skills necessary to exchange breathing gas, remove and jettison weights and perform any other skills necessary to manage an emergency underwater. The practice of going through the motions of managing some of these crises helps to review these complex psychomotor skills but also reinforces the requisite muscle memory.

All of these steps should be reinforced by using a checklist and consistent pre-dive ritual.

PERFORM: As we have discussed, *"Plan your dive and dive your plan."* However, remember that your competent performance in the water is your final goal. Qualified divers should be prepared to modify their dive plan if, during the dive, conditions change to the extent that could negatively impact or compromise your safety or the safety of your diving companions. That is a judgement call that you and your diving companions must be prepared to make. Remember, anyone can call a dive at any time for any reason.

"Situational awareness in scuba diving is essential to diving safety because you and your diving companions must be able to see or perceive any threats to your safety or well-being before that threat becomes reality." – Dan Orr

Conditions that could negatively impact safety may include accidently diving deeper than planned, the water temperatures being colder than anticipated, working harder during the dive than anticipated, using breathing gas at a rate higher than anticipated or a combination of these factors.

Much of this involves being situationally aware during the entire dive. Situational awareness is the ability to understand and continuously monitor the environment around you, the ability to perceive and understand any potential threats or hazards, and effectively respond to take action to mitigate any increased risks to yourself and your diving companions.

The components of situational awareness are:

- Monitoring your breathing gas supply and regularly sharing that information with your diving companions
- Elapsed bottom time relative to your dive plan
- Depth, current, surge, visibility, water temperatures, surface wave action
- Position/location relative to your entry/exit point
- Workload
- Overhead conditions
- Anything that could compromise your diving safety and the safety of your diving companions

"Situational awareness in scuba diving is essential to diving safety because you and your diving companions must be able to see or perceive any threats to your safety or well-being before that threat becomes reality." – Dan Orr

One other important concept regarding diving safety is experience. Past experience is important but from a safety perspective, recent experience is essential for diver safety. When talking with divers about their safety, I commonly hear, "Well, I know what I am doing, I've been diving for XX number of years!" Well, I'll tell you, that means absolutely nothing. Just because you've been carrying a certification in your wallet or purse for XX number of years has nothing do with your skills, abilities or qualification as a safe diver. Your recent experience gives you the skills and ability to respond to challenges that occur during any diving experience. After all, when you are underwater and something occurs, it's not your certification card that's going to help you, it's your recent skills that will make the difference. Whether you are qualified to dive at any location should be determined based upon your recent skills and abilities not your certification card. In other words, *"Dive your recent experience, not your certification card!"*

There is actually another "P" that has to do with diving safety but, not only is it spelled differently, but it also has more to do with hydration which will be addressed in a future article.

My personal mantra is *"Scuba diving safety . . . is no accident!"* Thorough planning, preparation, practice and performing as trained and qualified can increase the likelihood that your diving experiences with be what you got into diving for . . . to safely and enjoyably experience something that is like nothing else on earth – scuba diving!

References: Orr, D. Business of Safety. How Diving Safety Can Be Good For Your Business. Scuba Diving Industry Magazine. February 2024. Pgs. 18-20. Orr, D. and Orr, B., 101 Tips for Recreational Scuba Divers. WiseDivers.com/Best Publishing Company. Orr, D. and Douglas, E. Scuba Diving Safety. 2007. Best Publishing Company. Tillmans, F. ed. DAN Annual Diving Report. 2020. Divers Alert Network.

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– by Gil Zeimer, ScubaStoryteller.com and Zeimer.com

As an advertising copywriter and Creative Director for over 40 years, my travel clients have included the Federated States of Micronesia, Red Sail Sports, Princess Cruises, All Nippon Airways, Marriott, Hilton, Westin, plus more than 20 scuba magazines and websites.



"Don't Shop. Dive."

That's the motto of the "Blue Friday" concept, which was launched in 2021 by a Northern California diver as a healthy alternative to the Black Friday shopping insanity over the Thanksgiving weekend.

It is now gaining more traction worldwide to boost both trips and holiday sales.

Year 1: How It Started.

"Inspired by REI closing its stores the day after Thanksgiving, Blue Friday started as an excuse to take my son diving in California waters throughout the year," says Ken Carter of Mill Valley. "He had just received his Open Water certification, so I woke up one morning and booked all of the reservations at Point Lobos State Natural Reserve in Carmel-By-The-Sea in 2021, which happens to be America's first underwater reserve and has been called "the crown jewel of the California State Park System."

Ken believed that by endorsing this event, he would be giving back to the Earth by skipping the plastic consumerism and going diving. He envisioned that this would be the perfect way to work off your big Thanksgiving meal while seeing spectacular underwater scenery, including kelp forests, bright orange Garibaldi, rockfish, cod, octopi, nudibranchs and crustaceans.

"The first year, my son and I were joined by a handful of members of the Marin Scuba Club and the Dive Club of Silicon Valley," Ken adds. "Because we had such a great time with excellent visibility and virtually no other divers that year, we decided to launch a second annual trip in 2022."

He concluded, "Fall might be the peak time to dive Monterey Bay and other California waters. The crowds are gone, the fish are not, and the water clarity is some of the best of the year. While Blue Friday is just one day, if you're so inclined, you can extend it to Bluer Saturday and Bluest Sunday—especially if your extended family is in town—and everybody wants to get wet."

Year 2: How It's Expanded.

In 2022, Blue Friday expanded to 10 divers from those two clubs who braved the cold Point Lobos waters, rough seas, and varying visibility.

"The King Tides and a massive surge led to a sporty entry and exit at the boat ramp," reported Ken. "In fact, at high tide, the surge pushed waves up into the parking lot. The visibility was highly variable as well. Inside Whaler's Cove, visibility dropped to less than 10 feet (3 meters), and was a total green out in certain spots. Outside the cove and below 30 feet (10 meters), the visibility was quite good, greater than 25 feet (8 meters). I got to dive with my two-hose regulator. The tide was so low in the afternoon that one could walk out to the rocks at Breakwater middle reef."

Typically in this natural reserve, the marine life is large and plentiful. The divers were treated to rockfish, kelpfish, and a small herd of sheepshead fish. Sadly however, purple sea urchins have found the preserve and there are small urchin barrens in the deeper water, so the famed California Kelp Forests are still greatly diminished.



Ken Carter & His Son. Photo by Terry Rowe.

Year 3: Three Diving Sites in Two Countries.

Last fall, we publicized Blue Friday with stories in *California Diving News*, *DivePacific.co.nz* in New Zealand, *Undercurrent*, and other media outlets, including an interview on *ScubaRadio*.

Unfortunately, Blue Friday turned into No-Go Friday at Point Lobos

because the tides were very high and the water was very churned up from a big swell.

However, on the Big Island of Hawaii, Kerwin Lewis, a Marin Scuba Club member, exclaimed, "Ideal diving conditions. Surface temperature 83º, water temperature 80º. Visibility was the best I've seen in months — about 100 feet!"


Two Blue Friday 2022 divers.

Meanwhile, the American owners of Sun Divers Roatan reported, "It was a perfect dive day with surface temps in the low 80s, the water temperature at 82º, sunny skies, and calm waters. A special seahorse sighting was found off West Bay. This was one of the busiest holiday dive days we've had which shows that more people are opting out of Black Friday!"

Year 4: Blue Friday 4.0 Is Going Global.

This year, we're pulling out all the stops to promote Blue Friday on a global basis.

In the San Francisco Bay Area where we live, some members are signing up for a charter aboard the Beach Hopper II dive boat to explore Monterey Bay Submarine Canyon, the largest underwater chasm along the North American West Coast. About 60 miles (97 km) off the coast, it descends from 60 feet (18 meters) to nearly 12,000 feet (3,656 meters). If the weather and sea conditions cooperate, we may extend the trip with shore dives on Saturday in the Carmel/Monterey area. If interested, contact MaryJo Nelson.


The Blue Friday 2022 Team.

Our colleagues are again poised to get wet on the Big Island of Hawaii, in Roatan, Honduras, and other far-flung locales.

Kick-Off Your Holiday Sales a Week Before Thanksgiving.

Starting on Thursday, November 28, and running through Sunday, December 1, the holiday weekend will be celebrated later this year than normal. **So if you're a retailer, why not start your annual holiday sale the week prior to Thanksgiving?**

That will serve three purposes:

- It will give your customers a jump-start on their holiday shopping.
- It will kick off your holiday sales a week earlier.
- Simultaneously, it will free up the traditional Black Friday for a Blue Friday shore or boat diving event.

Training Agencies Can Get Into The Act, Too.

If you're offering certification courses at any level, think about the publicity you can generate by scheduling them over the Thanksgiving weekend for two days of shore or boat dives.

The DEMA Show Can Also Promote Blue Friday This Year.

The largest trade-only scuba diving, travel, and water sports event in the world is the perfect venue to also advocate for and publicize Blue Friday, just 10 days later.

Similar to the advice above for dive shops, both retailers and manufacturers should start planning their sales and trips accordingly, sooner rather than later. But by all means, promote them at the DEMA Show and make Blue Friday 4.0 a truly global event.

The Bottom Line.

If you live near the Monterey Peninsula, you're invited to join Ken and his dive buddies. If you live elsewhere, we invite you to organize your own Blue Friday events.

Wherever you are—warm water or cold, great visibility or limited, shore or boat dives—please promote your Blue Friday dive to your store, club, and buddies, join us virtually at your favorite dive site, and share your posts with me about it on social media. With your help, Blue Friday can become an evergreen holiday event.

To help plan a Blue Friday diving event or sale, please reach out to me. Scan or click the QR Code to email Gil.

email Gil

PHOTO PRO

How I Got The Shot: Sailfish on the Hunt

– Photos and text by Amos Nachoum, Big Animals Global Expeditions



Sailfish are among the ocean's most spectacular and captivating subjects. My quest to authentically document their feeding behaviors led me to the pristine waters off Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula—a region still largely untouched by the impacts of sport fishing. Every year, between January and March, these predators gather here, perfectly timed with the hatching of Brazilian sardines. In response to this predatory threat, the sardines form tight defensive clusters known as bait balls. The sailfish, with remarkable precision and strategy, herd these bait balls upward. As the sardines attempt to escape, they leap from the water, only to be met by frigate birds above, while below, the sailfish take turns striking with surgical accuracy. This coordinated predation is a rare and mesmerizing display of teamwork among oceanic predators.



To maximize our chances of observing these majestic creatures in action, I partnered with a local sportfishing captain. Rather than casting lines, he guided us to secluded spots typically reserved for anglers, providing an exclusive vantage point. This approach allowed us to witness the sailfish in their natural hunting environment, uninterrupted and undisturbed by other observers. What we encountered was nothing short of extraordinary.

One of the most striking aspects of this experience was the sailfish's ability to maneuver with such precision and coordination in crowded, high-speed conditions—without a single collision. Each maneuver was a deliberate part of their communal strategy, illustrating a complex social behavior that challenges our understanding of these creatures. Groups of sailfish worked in remarkable unison, herding the sardines toward the surface in what can only be described as a perfectly choreographed dance of nature.

This expedition was not just an opportunity for photography; it was an encounter that deepened my respect for these magnificent animals and the ecosystems they inhabit. It underscored the intricate interdependencies within marine environments and highlighted the critical need for their preservation. Witnessing such sophisticated cooperation among sailfish provided rare insights that researchers are only beginning to fully appreciate. This experience enriched my understanding of nature's complexities and reinforced the urgency of conservation efforts—to ensure that these extraordinary creatures continue to thrive for generations to come. Mexico, Yucatan Peninsula. January 28, 2009. Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III. Canon 14mm lens, f-8, 1/320, ISO 640.

email Amos





Tuesday, November 19 • 6:30-10 pm

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until November 1, then $90 until sold out



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

Mikki McComb-Kobza, Ph.D.

Explorer and Shark Conservation Biologist

Executive Director, Ocean First Institute

PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE **Women Divers Hall of Fame Scholarships & Training Grants** that offer financial and/or educational assistance to individuals of all ages, particularly those who are preparing for professional careers that involve scuba diving.

Start DEMA right and "Seas the Night!" at the Women Divers Hall of Fame Party! Dress up, dress down - no dress code ... just come and have fun!!! Mingle with diving legends and Members of the Women Divers Hall of Fame, friends and dive buddies.

Don't miss this exclusive event featuring an engaging presentation on the impactful research and conservation efforts of Ocean First Institute by Executive Director Dr. Mikki McComb-Kobza. She is an explorer, shark conservation biologist, and proud WDHOF Member.

This is also a fundraiser with a silent auction featuring great trips, jewelry, art, books, and so much more! There will be a no host bar and lots of great food including a carving station, pasta bar and passed hors d'oeuvres. Open to the public, so invite your friends and let's get the party started!

Scan the QR code or Click this Link to Purchase Tickets

ADVERTORIAL

Tips for Selling SeaCure Mouthpieces

– by John Flanders, SeaCure Mouthpieces, john@seacuremouthpiece.com



As a dive professional, guiding customers through equipment choices can be challenging. Accessories, often overlooked for larger items, can greatly impact a diver's experience. A $20 accessory like SeaCure can make the difference between a great or uncomfortable dive. SeaCure's moldable, trimmable design custom-fits each diver, enhancing both comfort and safety.

Following are three critical tips on selling SeaCure:

1. Start Mentioning SeaCure: Whenever discussing regulators with customers, introduce SeaCure as a complementary option. It enhances both comfort and safety, completing their regulator setup. Even if the diver isn't ready to purchase a regulator and plans to rent, offer them a size 2 SeaCure Mouthpiece—the most common size that fits most rental regulators. With five colors to choose from, they can enjoy a customized diving experience without committing to bigger purchases.

2. Know Your SeaCure Sizes: Understanding which SeaCure size fits your regulators is key. Many dive shops stock multiple regulator lines, so use SeaCure's size chart to ensure you're guiding customers to the correct fit. Some stores even post size guides next to regulators to help facilitate the sale and boost confidence in the purchase.

SeaCure™ CUSTOM MOUTHPIECE



3. Use SeaCure During Training: SeaCure in the Pool and Open Water. When you and your team are in the water with your students, everyone should have a SeaCure custom mouthpiece at the end of their regulator. Take 60 seconds during regulator skills to explain why you love and use SeaCure. Let them know it is for sale in the store and to come to you with any questions. Dive professional endorsement is the best way to build awareness for a product. But, endorsing a product while you are wearing it in a confined or open water environment is by far the most powerful way to "product place" any accessory. SeaCure offers a limited number of free mouthpieces for dive pros. Scan or click the QR code to send us an email. If you are a buyer or store owner and wish to receive a dealer handbook, please just scan/click the QR code and we will send wholesaler info.

SeaCure has been around for 33 years and is the world's greatest mouthpiece. Hundreds of thousands of divers have chosen SeaCure for a better, more comfortable, and safer diving experience. Don't you divers deserve the same?

email John

TRAVEL

Someplace New: Colombia's San Andrés Archipelago

– by Carlos Lander, Author "Beyond The Diving Course"

Carlos is a self-taught amateur archaeologist, author, programmer, and statistician with a background in economics and over 25 years in the diving industry.



Divers occasionally mention a mysterious Caribbean Island. They don't know much about it beyond the incredible marine life and beautiful reef. I'm here to shed light on Colombia's San Andrés archipelago.

San Andrés lies around 750 km (470 mi) north of the Colombian mainland, covering a total area of 57 km² (22 sq mi), including outer cays, reefs, and atolls. The island's land area is 45 km² (17 sq mi).



Like many Caribbean areas, this archipelago has a complex and turbulent history, involving pirates and struggles for control among England, France, and Spain. The Raizal ethnic group descends from pirates, British settlers, and enslaved Africans. After the dissolution of Gran Colombia, a 1920 treaty formally acknowledged Colombian control over the islands. Eight years later, Nicaragua recognized Colombia's authority over San Andrés, Providence, and Saint Catherine.

San Andrés, the largest island, is a captivating blend of cultures and a diver's paradise. In 2000, it was declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, recognizing its biodiversity and unique ecosystems. Spanish, English, and San Andrés–Providencia Creole are the official languages, reflecting the island's cultural diversity. The Biosphere Reserve, with its stunning beauty, is a must-see for any nature enthusiast, promising an exciting and memorable trip.

Planning a trip? The best way to get to San Andrés from the USA is via Miami or Panama, with round trips costing approximately US$600. Most flights require a stopover in Panama or Colombia, often in Bogotá or Medellín. A typical flight from Miami to San Andrés includes a layover of around two hours.

If you're planning to dive in Providence, you have two options: a 20-minute flight with local airlines like Satena or Searca, or a three-and-a-half-hour catamaran ride on Catamaran El Sensation or Conocemos Navegando. Flight and boat schedules vary by season, so book in advance. Keep luggage restrictions in mind, as local flights accommodate only about 20 passengers.

Despite a strong tourism infrastructure, San Andrés has limited diving operators, and the diving industry isn't heavily promoted. Most tourists ask their hotel for nearby operators. It's important to avoid unverified operators, especially in the less-developed southern part of the island, where businesses may lack safety protocols and often only offer shore dives.

Several established dive centers, such as Banda Dive Shop, Escuela San Andrés Divers, Diver's Team, and Fellow Divers, are linked with specific hotels. Decameron Resorts has five locations and offers all-inclusive experiences. Other excellent accommodation options include Samawi, Aquamare, Nativo, Arena Blanca, Hostal Portofino, and Casa Blanca, all offering breakfast and various amenities. For a more immersive, budget-friendly stay, try Airbnb or a locally owned inn. It's always best to contact dive schools in advance to arrange your trips.

The best dive spots are in the north, where well-preserved coral reefs thrive within protected marine areas. The water has excellent visibility, often exceeding 30 meters (100 feet), making it ideal for both new and experienced divers.

San Andrés also has hyperbaric chambers at the island's hospital, a rare safety feature not found on all Caribbean islands, providing peace of mind for traveling divers.

On Providence Island, you'll find a more rural, adventurous diving experience, including shark diving. However, it's important to consider the ethical responsibility of feeding sharks. Even without partaking, you'll encounter incredible marine life in a more pristine environment, offering a rural tourism experience.

In conclusion, San Andrés has the potential to become the Caribbean's premier diving destination if islanders and foreign investors focus on sustainable tourism growth. The combination of natural beauty, rich culture, and diverse marine life offers a promising future for the island's diving industry.

email Carlos

BUSINESS EDU

Avoiding the "Castle Mentality" in Business

– by Wayne B. Brown, author "From Rags to Enrichment" & CEO, Aggressor Adventures



Owning or managing a business that has more than one location presents a unique set of challenges when it comes to uniformity and consistency. This is especially true of a multi-destination business like Aggressor Adventures. Customers expect a particularly high level of service at each Aggressor destination, no matter where in the world it is located, and it's up to the local staff to deliver.

If you have your own business with more than one location or supervise multiple locations for an employer, it's important to schedule regular check-ins and site visits. Otherwise, it can be easy for the manager at that site to forget they are part of a larger network. They can start to feel alone or isolated. When this happens, managers may tend to think and act independently instead of following the Standard Operating Procedures of your company.



Regular Staff Meetings Ensure SOP Compliance.

This is what I call Castle Mentality.

I don't know if it's ego or just human nature, but I've seen Castle Mentality a lot. Without regular supervision, management staff, no matter how dedicated or hard working, will behave as if they have their own kingdom. They tend to start running the castle how they see fit instead of according to your company's policies. This is where customer service standards can go south, putting your entire enterprise at risk.

In 1986 the NASA space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds into its flight, killing all seven astronaut crew members aboard. The launch was broadcast on live television. Viewers watched in horror, wondering, "How in the world could this have happened?" When experts were investigating what caused the catastrophic failure of the spacecraft, they identified "normalization of deviance" as the root cause (see Dan Orr's similar article in the April issue). Normalization of deviance happens when individuals, groups or organizations come to accept a lower standard of performance until that lower standard becomes the "norm" for them. This usually occurs when individuals, groups or organizations are under pressure to meet schedule requirements, conform to budgetary considerations or deliver on a promise, while adhering to expected standards or prescribed procedures. When under pressure, they decide to utilize lower standards "just this once" with the expectation that when things get back to "normal" they will go back to utilizing the higher standards or procedures.



Wayne's New Book

I think you can see where this is going. Every time a corner gets cut, the standard gets lowered and soon, the high standard gets forgotten. Again, to keep your business running by the book, meaning the carefully outlined SOPs, stay in regular contact, reminding them they are part of a larger network or team with high standards that must be met. Regular check-ins by phone and video conferencing are important but they cannot replace in-person site visits. When you visit in person you can get a strong sense of what's working and what's not. When I visit a location, I stick to the objective of ensuring operations are running smoothly. I make sure to bring copies of customer surveys and comment cards we can go over together.

I make sure to point out areas in which they are succeeding instead of only addressing problem areas. This builds trust and helps your managers feel they are being supported. If they do have problems, they'll be more inclined to ask for help if they know you have their back.

Still, even with frequent visits and communications, some of your best and brightest may fall victim to their own self-motivation by deviating from the SOP and implementing changes without asking permission or running an idea by you. This is not a knock on your best and brightest, but an unfortunate outcome with some highly motivated employees. There must be a balance of leading while also following the program. When they think they can do it better than you by doing it their way, often the best thing you can do is help them recognize it might be time for them to move along and go do their thing someplace else.

email Wayne

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ECO PRO

An Interview with Reef-World Executive Director Chloe Harvey

– by Alex Brylske, Ph.D., President, Ocean Education International, LLC



Several years ago, I first connected with Chloe Harvey online and quickly recognized her as a rising star in sustainable dive tourism. Not long after, we met in person, and what started as a chance meeting became a professional relationship that has had a significant impact on my own work. Chloe has since become a leader in the field and now serves as the Executive Director of The Reef-World Foundation. She administers the Green Fins initiative, a UN Environment Programme project aimed at setting environmental best practices for dive operators worldwide. While Green Fins is widely known in many parts of the world, it has yet to reach the same level of awareness in North America and the Caribbean. Recently, I had the privilege of interviewing Chloe about her work and how the dive industry is evolving in the face of growing environmental awareness.

How do you see dive travel changing with the increasing sustainability awareness among today's divers?

Chloe: Dive travel is in the midst of a transformation, though it seems to be happening under the radar for some. The new generation of divers is bringing a heightened sense of environmental responsibility to the sport. It's not enough for them to simply "do no harm" during their dives—they want to contribute to regenerating the ecosystems they explore. This represents a major shift in consumer expectations, and businesses that embrace sustainability at their core will be the ones that thrive. Divers are no longer satisfied with being passive observers of the underwater world; they want to play an active role in preserving and restoring it.

To what do you attribute this shift in diver attitudes?

Chloe: Unfortunately, it's largely driven by the widespread devastation of our natural world. We're currently experiencing the fourth global coral bleaching event, which is the most widespread on record and is affecting over 75% of the world's coral reefs. While corals can sometimes survive these bleaching events, the stress they endure increases their mortality rates and reduces their ability to reproduce. At Reef-World, our vision is to give coral reefs the time and space they need to adapt and flourish. Coral reefs are crucial ecosystems that support around 25% of all marine life and the livelihoods of over a billion people, many of whom live in vulnerable coastal communities. Reefs provide essential ecosystem services like food security, coastal protection, and livelihoods, especially for nations most susceptible to climate change. Yet, the future of these ecosystems is in jeopardy.

Scientific research has shown that by addressing local threats to reefs, we can enhance their resilience and improve their chances of recovering from bleaching events. However, the window for protecting coral reefs is closing rapidly, and it's crucial that we scale up efforts to support resilience and prevent the collapse of these ecosystems.

How can divers and the dive industry contribute to the survival of coral reefs?

Chloe: Diving and snorkeling, like any human activity, come with inherent environmental risks. However, these recreational activities also offer a tremendous opportunity to connect people to the ocean and foster a desire to protect it. Dive tourism can bring significant economic benefits to local communities, and with the right approach, it can be a force for good. Divers often develop a deep connection to the underwater world, and many are eager to play a role in its conservation. The diving industry is in a unique position to cultivate this desire for stewardship.

How does the Green Fins initiative fit into this effort?

Chloe: Green Fins was launched 20 years ago in Thailand, a collaboration between Reef-World and the UN Environment Programme. It was created to help dive centers and resorts adopt environmental best practices, and today, it's recognized globally as the environmental standard for diving and snorkeling operations. Since its inception, Green Fins has grown significantly, with over 1,300 dive operators in 70 countries having pledged to follow its code of conduct. These operators have made measurable improvements in their environmental performance.

Over the last two decades, we've provided dive professionals with the tools they need to tackle the environmental challenges their operations face. Working closely with our national partners, we've mentored dive centers to adopt alternatives to harmful practices and move toward low-impact operations. As a result, some dive centers are now able to mitigate all environmental risks from their day-to-day operations, which is a huge accomplishment.

Aside from the environmental benefits, how does Green Fins help dive operators create successful businesses?

Chloe: Sustainable practices are good for both the environment and business. Dive centers that follow Green Fins' best practices often have healthier dive sites, which naturally attract more divers. This enables them to charge higher prices for their services because consumers are increasingly looking for environmentally responsible operators. Our survey of 1,400 divers in 2022 found that 64% actively seek out sustainable options, and 75% are willing to pay more for them. Gen Z and Millennials, in particular, are driving this trend, scoring about 10% higher on these questions than older generations.

Additionally, sustainable dive centers tend to have more loyal customers, employ more local staff, and retain them for longer periods. These factors contribute to overall business resilience, which is especially important as the dive industry recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.

What does the future look like for Green Fins and sustainable dive tourism?

Chloe: We're seeing a growing demand for dive experiences that go beyond just viewing marine life. Divers increasingly want to engage in activities that allow them to actively contribute to marine conservation. Our survey found that 83% of divers want more education on sustainability during their vacations, and 95% believe that dive centers should be doing more to protect reefs.



Chloe Harvey discussing sustainable dive tourism at the ADEX Show.

Forward-thinking dive centers are responding to this demand by offering new types of experiences. These range from removing harmful species like crown-of-thorns starfish and Drupella snails, which prey on corals, to monitoring coral spawning and bleaching, participating in marine debris clean-ups, and supporting coral restoration efforts. These conservation-focused activities are beginning to replace some of the more traditional specialty dives, like deep or night dives, that dive centers used to market.

How are other sectors of the dive industry responding to the shift toward sustainability?

Chloe: The shift toward sustainability is influencing every corner of the dive industry. Training agencies are developing new courses that focus on conservation and environmental responsibility. Dive equipment manufacturers are also getting on board by producing eco-friendly products that minimize environmental impact. Dive travel agencies and retailers are partnering with sustainable operators and educating their customers about how to travel more responsibly, from packing reusable water bottles to choosing reef-safe sunscreen.

The younger generations—Millennials and Gen Z—are particularly keen to embrace this shift. Millennials have already surpassed older generations in terms of purchasing power in the dive tourism industry, and Gen Z is close behind. These generations will continue to buy gear, travel to dive destinations, and need dive operators to guide them. Businesses that integrate sustainability into their core values and work closely with local communities to protect the marine environment will be the ones that succeed in the long run.

A Special Opportunity for DEMA Attendees

For those attending DEMA, there's an exciting round table discussion titled "Integrating Sustainability to Expand Your Business and Bottom Line." I'll be joined by Chloe Harvey and Cheryl Patterson, CEO of Deep Blue Adventures. We'll discuss how dive centers can integrate conservation experiences into their travel packages, benefiting both the environment and their business. This session offers a great networking opportunity to connect with industry experts and fellow dive shop owners. It will be held on Thursday, November 21, from 8:30-10:00 AM in Seminar Room S221.

You'll also have the chance to hear Chloe Harvey and myself at other seminars throughout the event:

Wednesday, November 20, 4:00 PM – *Dr. Alex Brylske: The Changing Face of the Dive Travel Industry… or is it?* This session will explore the growing influence of Millennials and Gen Z in dive tourism and how the industry can better engage these groups.

Thursday, November 21, 10:00 AM – *Dr. Alex Brylske: Building Deep Customer Connections Through Dive Travel: A Perspective from Maya Angelou* This seminar will focus on creating meaningful, long-lasting connections between divers and the ocean, helping to build customer loyalty and advocacy for marine conservation.

Friday, November 22, 12:00 PM – *Chloe Harvey: Green Fins – Navigating the Shift to an Eco-conscious Business Model* Chloe will provide practical advice on how dive operators can improve sustainability in their businesses and access resources to help them on their journey.

All seminars will take place in Seminar Room S221.

DEMA Seminars

TRAINING

Don't Let a Single Point of Failure Ruin a Good Day Diving

– by Eric Douglas, Lessons For Life Columnist, Scuba Diving Magazine, Author, Booksbyeric.com



There is a lot going on during a typical day of diving for the diver. There is equipment to bring, air fills to arrange, and snacks and water to grab. And that's just for a relatively easy local beach dive. When charter boats get involved, there are medical release forms, logbooks, and certification cards to check.

From the dive operation's perspective, there are dozens (if not hundreds) more moving parts to consider. Any of these could be a single point of failure (SPOF) that turns a potentially great day on the water into a nightmare for your clients – that they might post about on social media – or even a situation that genuinely puts people in danger.

A SPOF is anything in a system, even the simplest item that, when it fails, causes everything else to break down. The idea mostly comes from electrical circuitry, where a poorly soldered connection can break a loop causing everything to come to a screeching halt. However, it applies to any system that requires a high degree of availability.

How does that apply to diving? The most obvious example is a blown O-ring on a dive tank that ends a dive before it ever gets started. That's why we created "Save a Dive" kits. From a safety perspective, we developed emergency plans. Back in the old days, people even taped dimes or quarters to their written plans to use at a nearby payphone to call for help. That was long before everyone at a dive site had a cell phone.

Kell Levendorf, the Assistant General Manager & Risk Manager for Rainbow Reef Dive Center in Key Largo, Florida, said the modern equivalent for divers is cutting down their gear to only a digital submersible pressure gauge, often with a digital transmitter on their regulator first stage. When the battery in the transmitter or in the wrist unit fails, your dive – and likely the entire dive day – is over.

"One of my pet peeves is a diver who ONLY uses a transmitter to send pressure to a wrist computer and doesn't have a backup analog SPG," he said. "Computer failure or dead battery in the transmitter will make calling the dive on the boat or require immediately aborting."

Levendorf noted that he still teaches the recreational dive tables to his students. He believes divers should understand what is going on inside the computer, not just trust it blindly.

"They should also be able to continue or make a repetitive dive if their technology takes a dump on them," he said.



Rich has 3 compressors stations at local dive destination.

Rich Synowiec, the owner of Divers Incorporated in Ann Arbor, Michigan, operates the scuba concession at White Star Quarry in Madison Township, Ohio. About 10 years ago, after a massive storm knocked out power to the area, he realized he wasn't going to be able to open.

"Air fills are the prime commodity at the quarry. It [the power] came back on before the weekend but I was looking at really being in trouble."

Synowiec said he realized he needed to make a change. "Two weeks later I got a call about my portable and I



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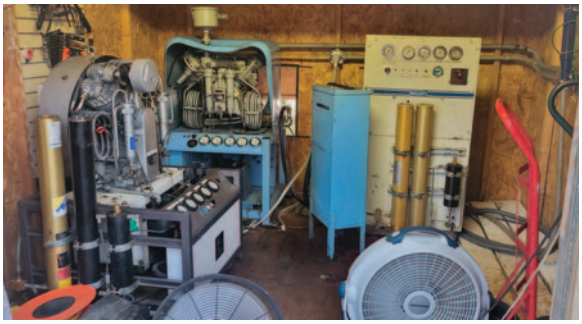
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bought it and rebuilt it. The quarry has three compressors now."

People can be SPOFs, too. An organization can be vulnerable if one person has all knowledge of a critical system. Cross-training employees is a wise approach. Make sure multiple people, if not everyone on the team, know how to do even the most basic tasks.

Have an employee who always does one thing? If they call in sick, who knows how to step in and do it as well? And if it's always you, that doesn't make sense either. Then it becomes a task that only the boss knows how to do, and your staff won't even know where to begin.

What if your boat captain calls in sick? Do you have a backup? How would you handle water getting into the fuel line on the boat? Do you have someone on staff or on standby that can jump in and fix a problem quickly?



On a retail level, what if the power goes out in your shop? Do you still have the ability to check divers in and receive their money manually or on your phone so you can still lead the dive?

"I'm too big to do it all myself. Manager, repair tech, instructor," Synowiec said. "Computers in the store, point of purchase."

Digital programs are great, until they aren't.

"One thing the staff seem to give me a hard time about (calling me a dinosaur) is my 'Manual' packet," Synowiec said. "In it you find everything you would need to run the business if there was no internet, phone or power."



A Dead Battery can Ruin a Dive.

When I worked for Divers Alert Network, I would make it a point to check oxygen units on dive boats as a goodwill gesture. Often, they would be disassembled and have parts missing. There would be no clean masks, just ones that had been reused multiple times during training exercises. An emergency situation on the water is not the time to be faced with incomplete or inadequate first aid equipment.

To minimize the possibility of a single point of failure situation in your dive operation, it's important to perform a regular review of your processes.



What could go wrong in the dive shop? This includes everything from slips and falls to lack of connectivity. What do you do if someone has a medical emergency in the dive shop before you even get underway? Does your shop staff have the same training as your boat crew?

How about at the dive site or on the dive boat? Think about the smallest parts. What does it really take? What could cause a diver to get hurt? Dive ladders move up and down with the motion of the water. But is it possible for divers to reach into the gap and crush their hand? It's happened before.

If a problem does arise, are you and your staff ready to help? On shore, you will likely need to provide less than 10 minutes of care before help arrives. That 10 minutes can feel like hours, though, if you're not sure what to do. On the ocean, miles from emergency help, you need to be prepared for anything. And so does your crew.

In scientific and commercial diving, the Diving Safety Officer tracks first aid and CPR certifications to make sure everyone is up-to-date. If they aren't, they don't dive. This practice makes sure that everyone is trained and ready to help. It is a solid practice from a liability perspective, too.

Obviously, you can play "what if" all the time with everything. But a thorough review of your processes might reveal some weak spots you never considered and help you uncover some metaphorical "O" rings that might ruin your day without a plan.

As Levendorf said, "Always prepare for things to go wrong. Everything on every boat is broken — we just don't know it yet. That's why I try to have a bailout boat. Same with equipment and personnel."

email Eric

PHOTO PRO

Diving into the Depths of Nature and Storytelling

– by Cristian Dimitrius, filmmaker for National Geographic, Brasil



Cristian Dimitrius is a leading figure in wildlife cinematography, celebrated for his ability to capture nature's raw beauty, particularly underwater. As an award-winning filmmaker and passionate diver, his journey from a young nature enthusiast to a globally recognized cinematographer reveals a dedication to documenting and protecting the natural world.

Early Inspirations and Career Beginnings: Born in Itajubá, Minas Gerais, Cristian grew up amidst the lush landscapes of the Mantiqueira Range. This environment sparked his early fascination with nature, nurturing a passion that would shape his future career. His childhood was filled with explorations of the region's biodiversity, laying the foundation for a life dedicated to wildlife and conservation. His professional journey, however, began not with a camera, but with diving.



Rajan, the last swimming elephant. Andaman Islands

While studying biology, Cristian discovered scuba diving and fell in love with the underwater world. Working at a dive center in southern Brazil, he advanced to become an instructor, sharing his enthusiasm for marine life. It was during this time that he first picked up a camera and found a way to combine his interest in nature with a newfound passion for storytelling. This experience led him toward a career in wildlife cinematography, with a particular focus on underwater filming.

Forging a Unique Path in Cinematography: Cristian's career is marked by a relentless pursuit of excellence. He spent eight years in the diving industry, including three at Stuart Cove's Dive Bahamas, where he gained valuable experience across different marine environments. Although he found success as a diver, he was more captivated by the art of documenting the natural world. Transitioning from diving to wildlife cinematography allowed him to align his love for the underwater realm with his ambition to tell compelling stories. This shift marked the beginning of his rise as a globally recognized filmmaker.

His early projects involved collaborations with Brazilian television, where he began to develop a distinctive style combining unique camera angles with compelling narratives. One significant project was the series "Wild Brazil," which showcased his ability to bring the wild beauty of Brazil to life. The series demonstrated not only his technical skills but also his capacity to emotionally connect viewers to the wonders of nature, capturing scenes rarely documented before.

Challenges of Underwater Filmmaking: Filming underwater requires a blend of technical expertise, physical endurance, and a deep understanding of the environment. For Cristian, diving is more than just a technique for filming—it's an essential part of his storytelling process. Each dive presents unique challenges, from low visibility and strong currents to the unpredictable behavior of wildlife. Dimitrius thrives in such conditions, turning these obstacles into opportunities for creating breathtaking footage.

Cristian's background in diving is extensive. He began with self-study and formal scuba certification, honed his skills while serving in the Brazilian army as a diving instructor, and later became a divemaster. This experience prepared him for the intricacies of underwater cinematography, where patience, technical skill, and an understanding of aquatic ecosystems are crucial.

One of his most significant challenges is capturing the behavior of elusive species. Unlike terrestrial wildlife, aquatic animals are more difficult to film because they often require the cinematographer to be nearby. Dimitrius frequently spends hours or even days diving in the same location to capture a few seconds of footage that perfectly encapsulates the natural behavior of his subjects. His persistence and deep connection to the underwater world are evident in the stunning imagery he produces.

Contributions to Conservation: Cristian Dimitrius's work goes beyond entertainment; it plays a vital role in raising awareness about the need to protect marine ecosystems. His films bring the underwater world into millions of homes, highlighting the delicate balance within these habitats and the threats they face from human activities such as overfish-



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11/21 @ 8:30 AM Round Table: Integrating Sustainability to Expand Your Business

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ing, pollution, and climate change.

He has collaborated with conservation organizations, lending his expertise and footage to support efforts to preserve marine environments. His work has been instrumental in influencing public opinion and policy, especially in Brazil, where his documentaries have drawn attention to the urgent need for environmental protection. By combining stunning visuals with powerful narratives, Cristian helps audiences appreciate the importance of conserving nature's beauty and resources.

Recognition and Accomplishments: Cristian Dimitrius's contributions to wildlife cinematography have earned him widespread recognition. Among his notable achievements are an Emmy Award for cinematography on "Untamed Americas" and his selection as the 2024 Boston Sea Rovers Diver of the Year.


American Crocodile, Jardines de La Reina, Cuba

The Emmy Award for "Untamed Americas," which aired on the National Geographic Channel, marked a major milestone in his career. The series showcased the stunning diversity and beauty of wildlife across North and South America. Cristian's intimate footage of animals in their natural habitats received praise for its technical brilliance and emotional depth. The Emmy highlighted his skill as a cinematographer and his ability to convey the urgency of conservation through storytelling.

In 2024, Cristian was named the Boston Sea Rovers Diver of the Year, a prestigious recognition of his significant contributions to diving and underwater filmmaking. The award acknowledged his decades of experience and his unparalleled ability to document the underwater world with both artistry and precision. It also underscored his role as an advocate for marine conservation, using his films to raise awareness about the need to protect the oceans and their inhabitants.


Japanese Snow Monkey in Jigokudani Monkey Park

Beyond these accolades, Cristian's documentaries have been featured on major networks such as the BBC, National Geographic, and Discovery Channel, reaching millions of viewers worldwide. His work continues to push the boundaries of what is possible in cinematography, producing awe-inspiring footage that not only informs but also inspires action to protect the natural world.

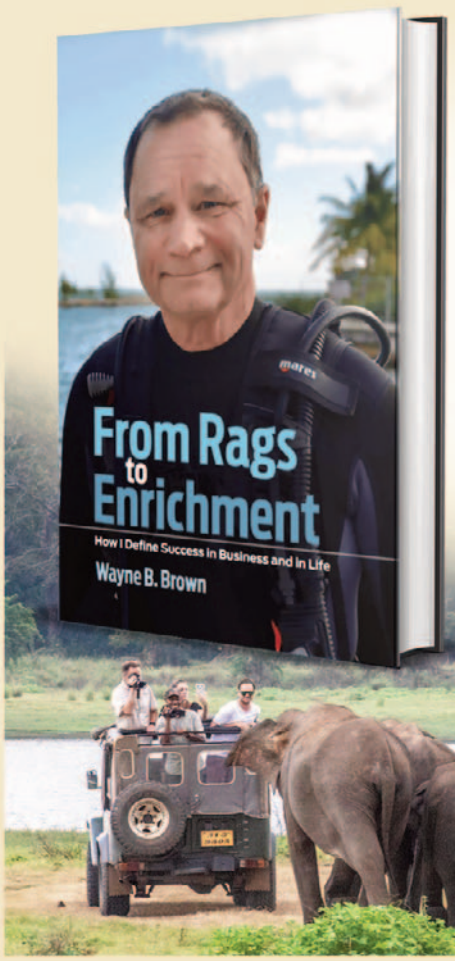
The Future of Underwater Storytelling: Cristian Dimitrius is embarking on his most ambitious project yet, which aims to innovate both the technical and narrative aspects of underwater filmmaking. Although he has yet to reveal full details, the project will focus on areas underrepresented in wildlife cinematography. Through a feature-length film and a series of short films, Dimitrius plans to address the urgent need for protecting fragile ecosystems.

His upcoming work will immerse viewers in a new underwater world, revealing life in environments that are both beautiful and challenging to film. The goal is to inspire real-world action by raising awareness about threats facing these ecosystems, such as pollution, deforestation, and climate change. Cristian hopes to change perspectives by illustrating the delicate balance sustaining life in these habitats and urging people to engage in conservation efforts.

Mentorship and Community Engagement: Besides filmmaking, Cristian is committed to mentoring future wildlife filmmakers. Through workshops and lectures, he shares his wealth of experience, inspiring aspiring cinematographers and conservationists to use their craft to protect the planet. His aim is to foster a community of filmmakers who can continue advocating for nature, ensuring that the mission to conserve the environment endures into the future.

Final Thoughts: Cristian Dimitrius's career is a testament to the power of passion, perseverance, and a deep connection to nature. His films do more than entertain—they play a crucial role in raising awareness about the importance of protecting our planet's ecosystems. As a diver, cinematographer, and storyteller, he continues to explore the depths of the natural world, bringing to light the beauty and fragility of life beneath the waves. As his journey evolves, the world eagerly awaits the next chapter in his remarkable career, knowing that his work will continue to inspire conservation efforts worldwide.

email Cristian



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BUSINESS EDU

Heroes and Guides: Make More Money with Story Branding

– by Cathryn Castle Garcia, Co-Owner C2G2 Productions, The Azores

Cathryn Castle Garcia is a writer, business strategist and co-owner of C2G2Productions.com, a multimedia production company. She lives on Faial Island in the Azores.



In last month's column, I invited you to join me at DEMA, where I'll be presenting two DEMA-sponsored marketing sessions. Both sessions focus on selling aquatic adventures with passion and purpose, and are titled, "Connect. Profit. Repeat."

I also mentioned that we're aquatic superheroes—and we can turn others into aquatic superheroes, too. But what I'll share with you in the upcoming DEMA sessions is that, to turn our customers into aquatic superheroes, we can't play the role of the hero. We've got to become the guide. This is the magic of story branding. And when you apply the "hero's journey" formula to your branding and marketing story, you set your business up for success.

Where would Luke be without Yoda or Obi-Wan? Where would Frodo Baggins be without Gandalf? Or Neo without Morpheus? Yes, "Star Wars," "Lord of the Rings," and "The Matrix" are movies about fictional characters, but each movie follows the hero's journey plotline. A character sets out on a journey, encounters a problem, and meets a guide. The guide helps the character — whose life is changed for the better — and they all live happily-ever-after. (Except for Darth Vader, but at least he dies a peaceful death, and his spirit joins The Force.)

These film franchises made huge profits because humans are hard-wired to respond favorably to the hero's journey narrative. The "Star Wars" films are the Jedi Masters of the box office, grossing over 10 billion dollars.

We can profit from story branding when we use hero's journey principles to grow our businesses. Think about it. We're literally guides. We teach people the magic of breathing underwater and guide them on trips all over the globe. Our hero's journey is already written: a terrestrial creature walks into our dive center and meets us. We guide them through the process of learning to dive. We equip them with the gear they need for their journey. And boom. They're heroes. *But only if we do a good job serving as their guide.*

I'll be at DEMA, ready to Obi-Wan you through the concepts of harnessing the force of story branding for the good of your business. If you're interested, I'll even be your Yoda, guiding you through more intensive training so you can develop Jedi Master-level marketing skills.

When – DEMA Sessions "Save the Date"

- November 20, 11 am – 11:45 am, Room S232, Session One
- November 20, 3 pm – 3:34 pm, Room S232, Session Two

In addition to the DEMA-sponsored sessions mentioned here, I'm happy to be available for "Connect. Profit. Repeat." bonus sessions on November 20 at 1 pm and again at 5 pm in Room S221, sponsored by my friend and colleague Cheryl Patterson and her team of travel experts at Deep Blue Adventures.

AND throughout the DEMA show, you can find me on the show floor or hanging out with the Cline Group gang at the Scuba Diving Industry Magazine booth, 8075. I'm excited about this year's DEMA show. I can't wait to meet you.

email Cathryn





Together, We Can Support Community-Based Conservation



The **Sea of Change Foundation** is a USA-based 501c3 non-profit organization founded by leaders in the dive and adventure travel industries. It is the official conservation partner of Aggressor®. The foundation develops and funds conservation and research initiatives that directly impact the natural world we all love to enjoy and explore. Their mission is to create positive change.

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DEMA SHOW

A Manufacturer's Perspective: Maximizing Your Experience at DEMA

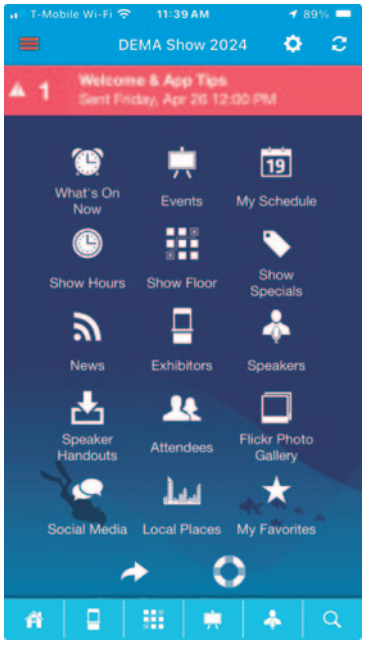
– by John Flanders, SeaCure Mouthpieces, john@seacuremouthpiece.com



Attending an industry trade show like the DEMA Show can be a transformative experience, offering a wealth of opportunities for networking, learning, and business growth. However, to truly maximize your experience, careful planning and proactive engagement are key. Here are several strategies to ensure you get the most out of your trade show experience.

The annual DEMA Show is the largest trade-only event in the world for companies doing business in the scuba diving, ocean water sports, and adventure/dive travel industries. It attracts hundreds of exhibitors and thousands of dive and travel industry professionals from around the world each year.

Set Clear Goals: Before you even arrive, define what you want to achieve. Are you looking to network with potential clients? Do you want to learn about the latest industry trends? Or perhaps you're on the lookout for new suppliers? Establishing clear objectives will guide your activities during the event and help you stay focused. Are you merchandising for the holidays and the upcoming season? This is a place where you have vendors that can help you with your plan to meet your goals. Remember, you are there to meet your goals, not the vendors' sales quotas.



Do Your Homework: Research the trade show's exhibitors, speakers, and sessions in advance. Familiarize yourself with the layout of the venue and identify key booths you want to visit. Take note of any sessions or workshops that align with your goals. By planning your schedule, you can maximize your time and avoid feeling overwhelmed by the sheer volume of offerings.

Network Strategically: Networking is one of the most significant benefits of attending a trade show. Approach the event with a mindset of building relationships rather than just collecting business cards or visiting old friends. Engage in conversations, ask insightful questions, and listen actively. Follow up with connections after the event (or at the end of each day) to solidify those relationships. Consider utilizing social media platforms like LinkedIn to stay connected with people you meet. Remember to bring your business cards! Also, have an electronic business card that you can text to people.

Attend Educational Sessions: Most trade shows feature a variety of educational sessions, panels, and keynote speeches. Prioritize these sessions based on your goals. They often provide valuable insights from industry leaders and can help you stay updated on the latest trends and technologies. Take notes during these sessions and consider sharing key takeaways with your team back at the office.

Leverage Technology: DEMA offers an app that provides schedules, an exhibitor locator, real-time updates, and networking features. Download the app before the conference starts and use this as a tool to manage your time at the event.

You pay good money to be at these events, so give it your full focus. Remember to leave a temporary voicemail recording to let people know that you are not available and will return phone calls within 24 hours. Set up a schedule to check voicemail and return calls twice throughout the day. Walking to and from DEMA and your hotel is a great time to return calls and get a little exercise. If you are really brave, turn your phone to "do-not-disturb."

With this strategy in mind, set up an email autoresponder. Let people know you are on the road and will do your best to answer emails. I set up a calendar event to check my email between the end of the show and before dinner. When I check my email, I focus on delegating emails to specific staff to answer (I coordinate this in advance). For emails I don't delegate, I keep my responses short or call people to avoid an email "back and forth."

Explore the Exhibit Hall: I always like to do a lap around the entire show floor as soon as I get there. Get a good lay of the land, taking notes on my phone of things

DEMA SHOW continued

I want to "dive deeper" into. The exhibit hall is where the magic happens. Once you have your quick view done, take time to explore booths beyond your immediate interests. You never know what innovative solutions or new partnerships might arise from a casual conversation at a neighboring booth. Approach vendors with an open mind and be curious about their offerings.

Collect Resources and Take Notes: DEMA is truly the definition of information overload. Besides all the equipment manufacturers, you are immersed in education and information from destinations, travel vendors, agency partners, and more. As you visit booths and attend sessions, collect brochures, samples, and other materials that can help you later. Take notes on conversations and insights gained throughout the event. This documentation will be invaluable when you return to your office, helping you recall important details and follow up on leads.

Follow Up After the Show: Most importantly, your trade show experience doesn't end when you leave the venue. Have a follow-up plan in place and time scheduled before you leave for DEMA for your post-conference follow-up. You need to schedule time after the event to follow up with contacts, review your notes, and assess whether you met your initial goals. This follow-up can reinforce connections and lead to potential collaborations or sales.

It's Almost Time for DEMA: By implementing these strategies, you can maximize your experience at DEMA. With careful planning and active engagement, you can turn a few days at the convention center into lasting relationships, valuable insights, and meaningful business growth. Embrace the opportunity, and you'll likely find that the benefits extend well beyond the event itself.

Register ASAP: DEMA Show 2024 welcomes professionals in the dive, travel, and water sports industries for a global gathering in Las Vegas this November 19–22, 2024. To maintain the excellence of this world-renowned event, all participants must possess specific credentials relevant to their profession.

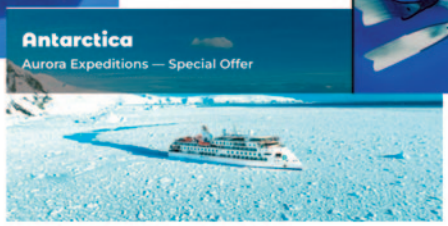
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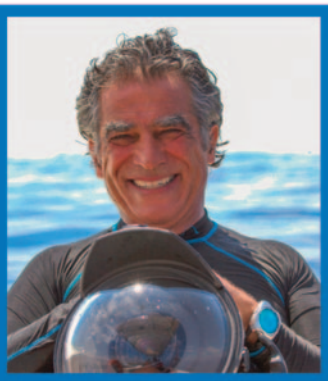
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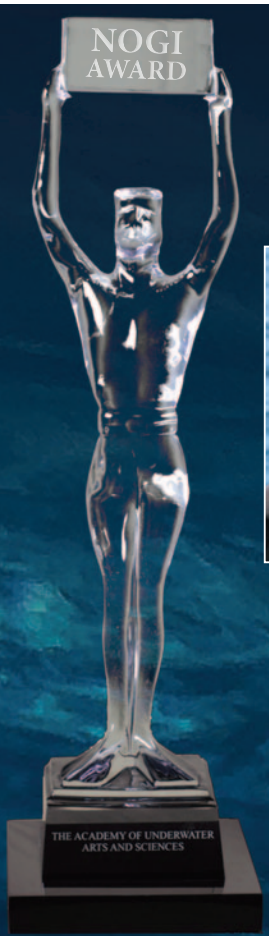
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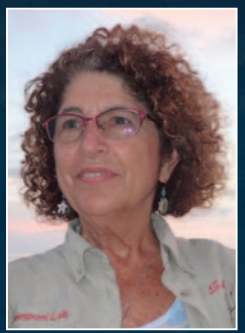
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The DEMA Show: It Still Matters for Dive Retailers

– by Jeff Cinciripino, JeffCinciripin.com, Former Owner of Scuba Shack, Rocky Hill, CT,

Jeff is the founder and president of Scuba Educational Alliance of Connecticut - a non-profit fostering a new generation of ocean stewards. He is also the host of The Scuba Educational Alliance Ocean Podcast and former owner of Scuba Shack in Rocky Hill, CT. He serves on the DEMA Board of Directors as well as several DEMA committees and is a Friend of the Boston Sea Rovers.



I often hear from many long-time dive industry veterans that the DEMA Show is not like the old days. Maybe some have come to believe that the Show no longer matters; but it does matter now more than ever. While it is fun to reminisce about days gone by, we know that as the dive industry has evolved over the years, so has the Show. The DEMA Show is a BIG DEAL for the scuba diving industry, and it is a VERY BIG DEAL for dive retailers. After an intense year of teaching, diving, working on equipment, and running an effective travel program, the DEMA Show offers the hard-working dive retailer and their staff a chance to see beyond their small slice of the industry. We engage with partners, colleagues, and form new relationships for the next season and beyond. By attending the Show, you are maximizing the business value in a cost-effective manner while making the most efficient use of your valuable time.



Expense management is critical in business, especially for small local dive shops. The educational package registration fee for the DEMA Show is an incredible bargain. The early bird registration cost is only $60 USD. For this low price of admission, you get four days of access to the show floor, DEMA-sponsored education sessions, exhibitor-sponsored seminars, special sessions, and the resource center presentations. If you are unable to attend all four days, there are several other packages available that are even more affordable. Additionally, DEMA has contracted for room blocks at their host and nearby hotels at a significant savings.

For many dive shops, the timing of the show is optimal. While not everyone is wrapping up their dive season, most are starting to now look ahead to the new year and setting their strategy for what lies ahead. The November timeframe is an excellent time to break away from the dive shop routine and leverage all that the show has to offer as you formulate your upcoming year's business plan and budget. The show also allows you to look at longer-term strategic direction and investments.

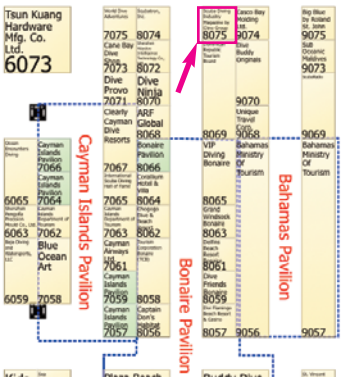
In addition to the optimal timing of the show, you also have the advantage of making the most effective use of your time. Most dive retailers are constrained by time and money when it comes to business travel. In the past, I have been invited to specific vendor events at various times of the year. The value proposition of these individual vendor events is difficult to justify when it comes to the expense and time away from the business. At the DEMA Show, I am able to interact with all the key stakeholders critical to my business success. The opportunity to meet in-person with your travel partner, training agency, and current vendors in one place is invaluable. You also get to investigate and evaluate other opportunities to strengthen and grow the business. This four-day immersion is priceless.

Getting the most out of the DEMA Show involves attending the event with a plan. Your plan should include appointments with your existing vendors and partners, layered in with the specific educational sessions that you want to attend. One of the best ways to start the process is to download the DEMA Show app and begin to review the educational sessions that you would like to cover. The events icon takes you to all of the activities organized by day or track. You can read all about a specific session and click on the star to add it to your calendar. You now have the start of your schedule for the show.

After making the first pass at the sessions that you want to attend, you can now begin to schedule meetings with vendors, partners, and colleagues. Typically, most sales

representatives will reach out to set up a time to meet; however, you may want to touch base to pencil in an optimal time. Because time is valuable at the show and the booths get busy, you will want to ensure you have the time blocked in advance.

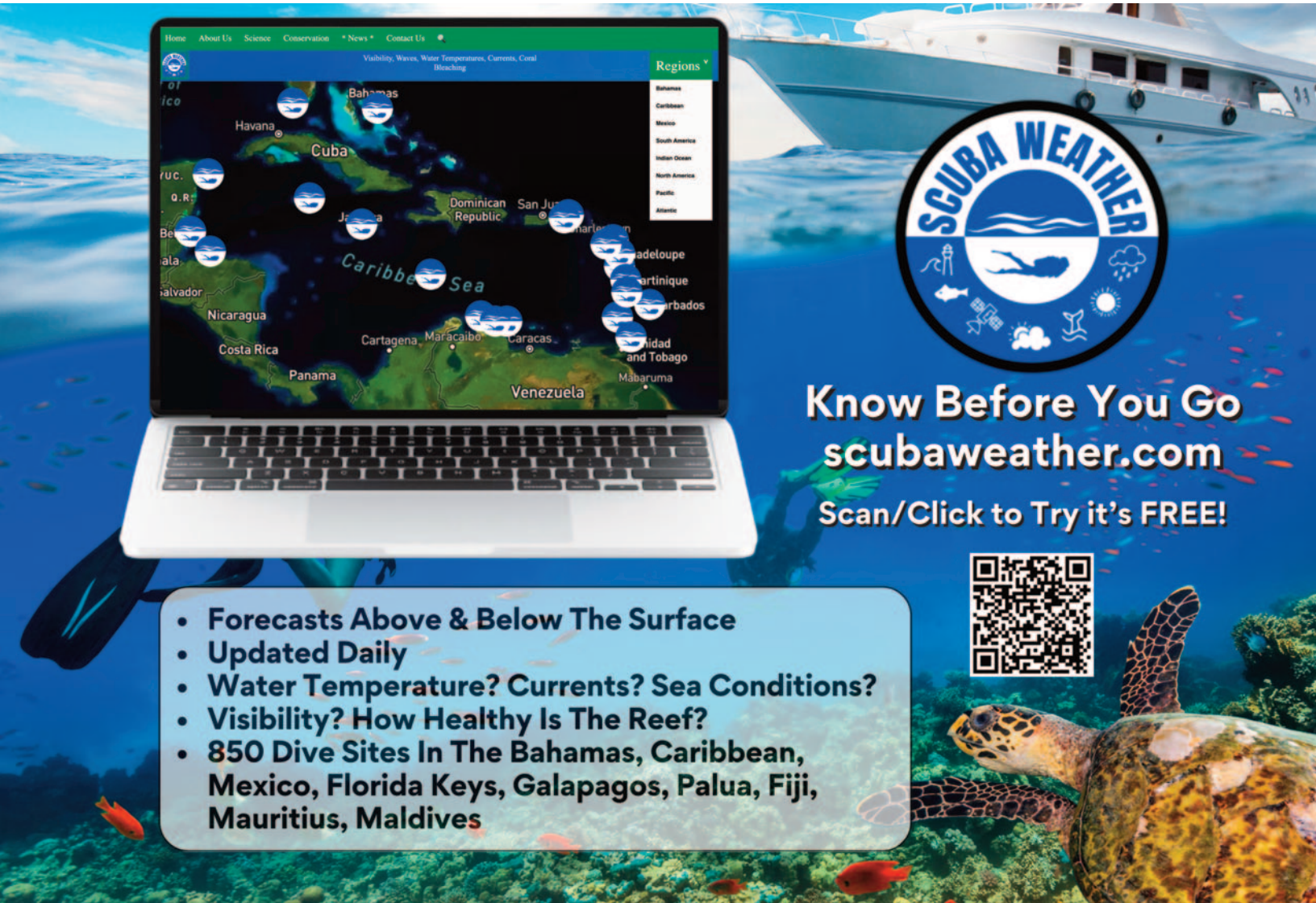
The DEMA Show application also lists all the exhibitors at the show. Visiting specific booths should also be a part of your plan. By using the app to star the exhibitors on your radar, you now have a list of favorites to guide you through the four days. This list also contains the booth numbers so you can find them readily. Once you visit the booth, simply click off the star. This process helps to ensure you don't miss any of the exhibitors that you are interested in meeting.



Another great opportunity to learn more about and network within the diving industry is to attend the annual DEMA Member Update and Annual Meeting. This breakfast meeting is normally held on the second day of the show and is an excellent way to get the latest on what is going on as Tom Ingram, DEMA's President and CEO, updates all attendees and introduces the DEMA Board and Committees. Recognition of the recipients of the DEMA Wave Makers and Community Champion Awards also happens at the DEMA Member Update. The meeting is open to all attendees of the show.

It is also important to give yourself time to browse the exhibit hall. With so many booths and exhibitors, you will want to walk through the aisles and discover the hidden gems that you may not have uncovered during your planning. The DEMA Show is full of surprises that will provide the dive retailer with ideas for expanding their offerings of products, services, and travel destinations.

Because there are so many different activities at the show, you need to also include your staff who will be attending in your plan. There may be conflicts, and outlining



a schedule to properly cover the waterfront is important. Work with your team to determine who will attend specific sessions, investigate new products and services, and check out new travel destinations. As the week goes on, make sure to set aside some time with your team to go over the day's events. This will give you the opportunity to follow up with specific exhibitors and gain their perspective on areas of interest.

Finally, take advantage of the after-hours show activities. Many of the training agencies have receptions where their members get to socialize and hear from their leadership. Divers Alert Network also has a gathering that is very well attended. Exhibitors may also have after-hours activities to thank their customers for their support. These gatherings are another key benefit of the DEMA Show - networking.

In 2020, our lives changed dramatically with the pandemic. We instantaneously moved to a virtual world of working from home and Zoom meetings. The dive industry felt the impact dramatically as we were unable to interact with our customers and partners. We felt it deeply with the cancellation of the DEMA Show. Many thought the DEMA Show would not survive. Fortunately, the show has survived with its comeback in 2021, despite all of the headwinds. That show set the stage for the recovery and the success of 2022 and 2023. Now, on the verge of the 2024 show and as we make our way back to Las Vegas, we can definitely answer the question: the DEMA Show matters now more than ever, not only for dive retailers but for the entire diving industry.

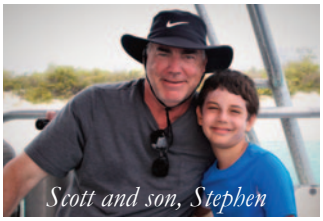
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ADVERTORIAL

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Christian Divers Build New Community to Help Share Their Faith

– by Scott Jones, President, Dive Newswire Press Service


Scott and son, Stephen

As a Christian, I've always felt strongly about importance of making a difference. As a scuba diver, I have experienced the beauty of the underwater world. Recently, I have brought those two ideas together and formed a community of like-minded Christian Divers. The new Facebook Group *Scuba Divers For Jesus* is something I have been thinking about for some time.

The opportunity to create a community of divers is not something new. A community of "Christian" divers is. What's the difference? Simple. For Christian divers it is not always just about the experience and being underwater. It is also an opportunity to give something back. There are many stories of divers of faith bringing extra supplies, donations and even building materials to help those less fortunate in many parts of the world. However, there has not always been a way to share these stories with other believers. Until Now.

A person's faith is a personal decision and not everyone is enthusiastic about sharing it. However, there are those inspired to talk about their relationship with Jesus Christ. This community allows Christian divers to communicate with one another, share their faith and encourage others.

Scuba Divers for Jesus will provide a regular flow of information – stories, testimonies, scripture, encouragement and more. A community of believers becomes a strong channel for ideas, inspiration, acknowledgment, and recognition.

Using the Facebook social media platform allows members to easily share information with others and be a positive influence in a world that can really use it. There is no cost to participate, and anyone is welcome to join us.

If you have questions or suggestions, please send me an email (scott@divenewswire.com) or text 714-931-4895. The best is yet to come!

FB Group Page

email Scott

TRAVEL

Diving into Europe? Try Spain's Costa Brava

– by Peter Symes, Publisher, X-Ray Magazine



"Describe diving in the Mediterranean, which we tend to think of only as a cruise destination," was the task I was given. However, with 21 countries boasting coastlines along the Mediterranean, which stretches approximately 2,500 miles (4,000 km) from west to east, it is impossible to cover the vast array of sites and cultures in this region within a reasonable timeframe. This diversity is a significant part of the beauty and appeal of this historic area. One commonality among these locations is that there is just as much, if not more, to explore topside. Therefore, a general recommendation for visiting Europe is to allocate part of your day or days for diving while reserving the rest for exploring the area.



Among the criteria I have established for this series is that the locations must be near a hub (major airport) served by direct flights from the US—using New York as a common reference—and that the dive operator is reputable and well-established.

My next highlight is Costa Brava in northeastern Spain, part of the historic region of Catalonia, which straddles the border with France. It offers a vibrant mix of cities, scenic coastlines, and rich cultural heritage. Barcelona, the capital, attracts visitors with iconic landmarks such as La Sagrada Família and Park Güell, alongside lively markets and cultural attractions. Do consider spending a few days in this fantastic and fascinating historic city before or after going to the dive resort.

Costa Brava boasts stunning Mediterranean beaches, while the Pyrenees provide excellent hiking, skiing, and charming villages. Catalonia's rich traditions, such as its human towers (castells) and local festivals, immerse visitors in its unique culture. The region's world-class cuisine, featuring Catalan specialities and renowned wine areas, adds to its appeal for travellers seeking diverse experiences.

Cala Joncols—where "cala" refers to a small bay, cove, or inlet in Catalan—is home to the dive resort of the same name. This resort includes a hotel, restaurant, and dive centre, all situated in a sheltered, picturesque location. It operates under the umbrella of Euro-Divers, which has been in business since 1972. The diving in the region is characterised by walls covered in colorful corals. Our American writers visited this resort a few years ago, leading to an article on our website (x-ray.com) called *Cala Joncols - Costa Brava*, which offers a fuller description. I contacted them again for this post, and they confirmed they found it easy to arrange and travel to, with one minor caveat: the operator does not provide transfers from Barcelona Airport, which is about 100 miles south of Cala Joncols. The best option is to rent a car at the airport, allowing you greater freedom to explore the area. There are many picturesque fishing villages along the coast with excellent restaurants, or you could stop in nearby Figueres to visit the Salvador Dalí Museum.

I should also mention that technical diving and rebreather support are available but only during the summer months. They don't have any wrecks either, but how about an underwater winery?

email Peter



CALYPSO FILES

Go Aboard Calypso with Jacques Yves-Cousteau's Photographer

– Photos Courtesy of Bill Macdonald, Former Calypso Crew Member & Renowned Filmmaker



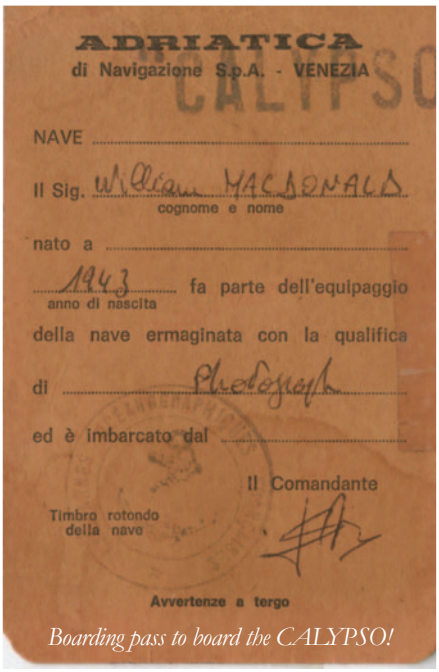
In this rare and intimate interview, we sit down with a former crew member who worked closely with the legendary Jacques Cousteau aboard the famous research vessel Calypso during the 1970s and 1980s. This crew member, who played a key role in Cousteau's underwater explorations, opens up about their personal journey, life at sea, and the profound impact of his time with Cousteau.

Early Life and the Call of the Ocean

Interviewer: How did you get involved with the Cousteau Society, and what was your early experience with the ocean?

Bill M.: I didn't even learn to swim until I was nine. By the time I was ten, I was hooked. I used to go free diving along the jetty at Manasquan, New Jersey, until I was blue. My first taste of scuba diving came in the summer of 1958 when I saved up from selling ice cream and working at a donut diner to buy my first scuba tank. While my friends were chasing after girls, I was focused on owning that tank. It felt like a whole new world opened up for me.

From there, I started diving with a club in New Jersey. I remember one of my first dives under the ice in Lake Hopatcong, cutting through the ice to take a plunge into the freezing water. That really marked the beginning of my deep connection with the underwater world.



Boarding pass to board the CALYPSO!



Bill aboard the CALYPSO!

Meeting Jacques Cousteau and Joining the Calypso Crew

Interviewer: How did you transition from being a recreational diver to working with Jacques Cousteau?

Bill M.: My professional journey really took off in the late 1960s when I became an instructor for LA County and then worked as a salesman for US Divers, the American branch of what would later become Aqualung. At one point, I was their top salesman, but my heart was always with underwater exploration.

That's when the Cousteau Society came calling. They were looking for a diver who could also lecture and support their work. Within weeks of meeting Philippe Cousteau, I was on an expedition in Mexico. My first assignment was aboard the Serenade, Philippe's sailboat, and from then on, there was no looking back.

Life on the Calypso and Slipstream Diving

Interviewer: What was life like aboard the Calypso? Can you tell us about some of the diving techniques you learned from Cousteau's team?

Bill M.: Life aboard the Calypso was incredible but also demanding. We were always on call, 24/7. If the team needed a diver, you had ten minutes to gear up and board the Zodiac. I was primarily a still photographer for the crew, and I worked closely with scientists, documenting their experiments and underwater discoveries.

The diving techniques were unique to Cousteau's crew. They taught us something called slipstream diving, which involved exhaling fully and controlling your buoyancy without the use of modern buoyancy compensators. This made us more streamlined, allowing us to move through the water like fish. It wasn't easy, but once you mastered it, you felt like you were part of the ocean. Bernard Delamotte, one of the chief divers, was my mentor in this.

Memorable Expeditions and Interactions with Cousteau

Interviewer: What were some of the most memorable expeditions you were part of during your time with Cousteau?

Bill M.: One that stands out is the expedition to Aldabra Island, just outside the Gibraltar Straits. We were working with Captain Cousteau's soucoupe, a small diving saucer used for underwater exploration. I was part of the team that helped untangle the soucoupe from thick kelp. There I was, with Captain Cousteau himself nearby in the pilot seat, and I remember thinking, "This is it. I've made it." That sense of achievement and awe stayed with me.

Another unforgettable experience was when I was tasked

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CALYPSO FILES continued

with scouting locations for the Cousteau team to film saltwater crocodiles, or "puk puk," in Queensland, Australia. My research led to an incredible moment where the crew filmed a 12-foot crocodile up close. That was one of the highlights of my career.

The Impact of Jacques Cousteau

Interviewer: How would you describe Jacques Cousteau's impact, both on you personally and on the world?



Bill shooting with the Cousteau crew.

Bill M.: Cousteau was the most famous man on the planet during the 1970s, thanks to his television series. His name opened doors everywhere. I remember when we returned to Mazatlán, Mexico, after a shoot on Isabella Island, crowds gathered just for a glimpse of him.

Working with him changed the way I saw the ocean and the environment. He was passionate about conservation long before it was mainstream. He taught us not just to observe the ocean, but to protect it. His message was clear: the ocean is vital to life on Earth, and we must take care of it.



Bill with the Cousteau crew.

The Evolution of Underwater Filmmaking and Environmental Advocacy

Interviewer: How has underwater exploration changed since your days with Cousteau, and what is your current focus?

Bill M.: The technology today is mind-blowing. Back in the 70s, we used large cameras and film rolls that I had to lug through customs. Now, you've got drones and high-definition cameras that fit in your pocket. Social media platforms like YouTube have given rise to some incredible ocean photographers.

These advances are amazing, but the real challenge now is dealing with environmental issues. I've spent the last two decades focusing on plastic pollution in the ocean, particularly micro and nano particles. These tiny pollutants are damaging the ocean's food chain, starting with zooplankton and phytoplankton, which are crucial for oxygen production. This issue has the potential to affect all life on Earth, and it's a problem we need to address now.

Final Reflections and Advice for Future Generations

Interviewer: What advice would you give to aspiring oceanographers and documentary filmmakers?

Bill M.: My advice is simple: follow your heart. That's what I did, and it took me on an incredible journey. But also, stay grounded in science. Use research to uncover the truth and always look for your niche. Whether it's plastic pollution, marine biology, or underwater filmmaking, find what you're passionate about and go after it with everything you've got.

Lastly, never forget that the ocean is not just a resource; it's a living, breathing part of our planet. We need to protect it if we want to preserve life on Earth.

email Bill

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DEMA SHOW SOCIAL CALENDAR

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
After The Show	*Before The Show*	*After The Show*
Westgate Hotel	Convention Center	Westgate Hotel
DAN Social/Party & Women Diver's Hall of Fame	8am DEMA Member Breakfast	PADI Social/Party
	After The Show	
	Westgate Hotel	
	NOGI Awards	

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SCUBA DIVING INDUSTRY MAGAZINE

Diving Into Success: Insights from the Writers at Scuba Diving Industry Magazine



BUSINESS EDU

The Business of Women Divers: As if Women Weren't Already Attractive Enough?

– by Linda Sue Dingel, President, Dive Marketing Media, PADI Course Director, DAN Instructor Trainer, DEMA Member



According to an AI tool, women make up a little less than 40% of scuba divers worldwide and 23% of continuing education students, but there is a gender gap in the professional diving industry. According to PADI, 20% of all PADI Pros and 13% of PADI Master Instructors are women, which is lower than the percentage of women in other industries like medicine, law, and financial services, but current trends show approximately 30% of new PADI Pros are females entering the market. In DEMA's 2023 global diver survey (with over 8,300 respondents), only 34% of the respondents were women. Some say that the diving industry needs to be more inclusive and provide more opportunities for women to take on leadership roles. Others say that the industry is slowly becoming more female-filled, and that women in diving are inspiring success stories. Let's take a look at some fantastic diving females, and let you decide for yourself.

Growing Girl Divers: When I became a PADI Course Director in 2005, there were only 12 women who were actively teaching Instructor Development Courses in the USA. While mentoring under Pam Strother, a female Course Director at Dive N' Surf in Redondo Beach, California, and working alongside a heavily dominated team of female staff members, I didn't realize how rare that ratio of Women Dive Professionals working together in the industry really was until I attended my first DEMA and saw firsthand the difference of men and women who were at the show.



Women's Dive Day with Dive N' Surf, Divettes including 6 PADI Professionals. Photo Credit: Linda Sue Dingel.

Ten years ago, PADI® Women's Dive Day event was created with the purpose of attracting and encouraging more women to participate in the sport. It has been a catalyst for the dive community to break down barriers and empower divers of all genders, ages, races, backgrounds, and abilities to confidently explore and protect the ocean. It is helping transform lives and open the door to the underwater water world on a day in which the dive community rallies together to encourage diving for All.

Since 2015, this Annual Dive Day event has been celebrated every year on the 3rd Saturday of July. I look at it like it's a National Holiday just for me. The popularity of dive centers participating by inviting divers to dive together on this day has grown to beyond four thousand shops around the world each year. This day is now recognized as the largest celebrated dive day worldwide. "After a decade, we've seen the tide turn," says Katie Thompson, PADI's Senior Director of Environment & Sustainability. That's how long it's been since this initiative was identified as a solution to increasing female involvement in the dive industry. While female certifications are now increasing, the additional challenge is to also see more women now through to the professional level.

Going Beyond Diving: The Women's Dive Day annual event has turned into much more than just groups of female divers entering the water either by shore or by boat for a fun dive. "Women's Dive Day" has expanded over the years beyond just PADI Dive Centers and often includes other activities besides diving to encourage participation. Like "Diving with a Purpose" to raise money for non-profit organizations, including a yoga session, wine and cheese days, and extending the dive day into a girl's weekend to experience land-based activities and more.

Female owned Divetech on Grand Cayman by Jo Mikutowicz, has been organizing this annual event for 9 years. Her dive center has created a day that attracts an average of 120 people total including diving, snorkeling and pool support buddies and friends. Eighty divers every year enter the water from the Cobalt Coast shore location and join in the fun including men, women and children. Other dive centers in the area collaborate with Divetech by contributing dive staff, extra tanks, equipment, vehicles and anything else they can offer that's needed without hesitation. Jo states it's created an environment the entire community supports by "talking about the event all year long and encouraging everyone who is a diver to attend." Participants for this event have also started to arrive from overseas just for this day. Donated prizes like gift certificates to local restaurants, paddleboards, and more

are awarded to attendees who find rocks on the dive with corresponding numbers to the prizes as part of their entrance fee.

The entrance fee from this dive day event is also benefiting the local organization of Cayman Island's Breast Cancer Foundation as 100% of the money raised is donated to the foundation. Divers who find rocks after the event can also still receive prizes that correspond to prize numbers who pay the donation entrance fee. To-date, Divetech has raised over $50,000 in donations for Breast Cancer since the event began. This year the event has generated $11,500 since July 2024 and continues to support the Cancer Foundation with their ongoing initiative and goal to hit $15,000 by year-end.



Divetech is Known by their Signature Pink Dive Boats. Photo Credit: Divetech.

Level Up: Jack's Diving Locker is located in Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii and operated by the managing partners, Jeff & Teri Leicher. Jack's supports many events like their Ocean Fair and Family Weeks throughout the year that invite and encourage diving year-round. By utilizing a day devoted to women and diving that attracts specifically female divers, they have managed to create a support team consisting of approximately 50/50 male to female staff members year-round, including one of their boat captains, 21-year-old, Sierra. "Captain Sierra is one of the best I've ever worked with. I think she handles a charter like a magician handles a card trick. I see it but I can't believe it. Smooth and seamless!" states Keller Laros, also known as the "Manta Man," Co-Founder of Manta Pacific Research Foundation and co-worker with Jack's since 1991.


21-year-old Captain Sierra on Jack's Diving Locker boat. Photo Credit: Jack's Diving Locker.

By supporting event days that make diving and snorkeling fun, and are family-friendly, Jack's has attracted staff and increased certifications. Their staff currently consists of a female Director of Education, PADI Course Director, Staff Instructor, Jr. Diving Program Coordinator, and 2 more female Conservation Team Members. Their annual celebratory Women's Dive Day event this year consisted of an all-female crew, including Captain Sierra, and the boat catered to any special lady who'd like to dive with them.

Bring on the Swag! Gear Manufacturers are often sought after to contribute goods for prizes and raffles. Two women-owned gear manufacturers do not disappoint when it comes to ponying up for female events! Not only do these manufacturers partner with each other, but each of their products can be found as swag and demo products at dive stores who promote Women's Diving events, which in return supports these manufacturing businesses like ScubaDoRag® and Stream2Sea.

Suuz Martines, owner of ScubaDoRag is the original dive fashion expert since 2000. Before that she was a visual merchandiser which helped dive retailers with display ideas that sell utility, fun and spark impulse buys. When she was a new diver she took her love of color into the diving industry when she discovered a need to help make it safer, easier, fun and also stylish. At considerable expense as a new company, she exhibited at countless consumer trade shows. Suuz listened to customers' needs and then helped work with dive store owners to offer impulse product purchase options used for identification, ease of donning (wetsuits), averting blisters, hair management, and safety while diving. ScubaDoRag products are made of durable polyester lycra fabric and over the years she has partnered with several larger manufacturers like Cressi and Pelican Products to help provide a stylish complimentary coordination with nearly any donned scuba gear product including tech gear.

ScubaDoRag supports dive centers and social media groups like Scuba Women with products for Women's Dive Day. This allows participants to take on a fun scuba print personality. Some prints are often adopted by dive instructors which turn into Ambassadors for her products by wearing a coordinating fashion print, like a "zebra" which she affectionately calls "seabra."

Autumn Blum, is a cosmetic chemist and owner of Stream2Sea. She has created the only mineral-based sunscreen on the planet that's been tested and proven safe for freshwater fish, saltwater fish, and coral larvae and has passed the stringent HEL Labs Protect Land + Sea certification. Autumn tells me "We get a TON of requests for

free products for everything from travel goodie bags to boat products and raffle giveaways. As a small business, we have to watch our budget, and sometimes can't be as generous as I wish, but we do the best we can to support our partners. These events are a perfect opportunity to educate and get our products directly in the hands of the divers who ultimately will become brand advocates. We have participated in many collaborative Women's Day events since Stream2Sea started, and I truly believe this is one reason why we have so many passionate supporters."



ScubaDoRag Models are Color Coordinated for Identification and Safety. Photo Credit: ScubaDoRag.

Connecting the Dots: Margo Peyton is the owner of Family Dive Adventures. Her love of diving did not stop when she had children, nor was it going to be put on "pause" until they grew up. Instead under the mentorship of Carolyn Pascal from *Sport Diver Magazine,* Margo created her business: Kids Sea Camp. She designed a travel company that invited families from all walks of life who enjoy diving, to vacation together doing what they love to do. By implementing family vacations with Kids Sea Camp, parents, teenagers, children and young sassy aged water lovers grew up bonding over diving while on vacation together year after year.

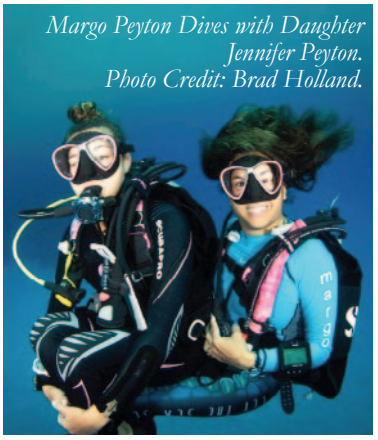


Women's Dive Day with Stream2Sea Defog & Sunscreen. Photo Credit: Stream2Sea.

For over 25 years, Margo has been leading families diving around the world while nurturing kids throughout their certification process in climbing the ranks. As a member of the Women's Diving Hall of Fame, Margo has sponsored 5 women each year for WDHOF with PADI beginner and advanced dive training grants and another 2-3 sponsorships at the Scuba Show as well as countless local children located in the Kids Sea Camp destinations each year. To-date, Kids Sea Camp has certified over 8,000 children starting with her own daughter, Jennifer Peyton.

Kids Sea Camp has produced thousands (Yes, "Thousands"!) of female divers with PADI Junior Open Water and Open Water Certifications. In the 24 years Kids Sea Camp Inc. has been teaching kids to dive, there are now another 50 PADI Divemasters (30 of them being female) and 32 Instructors (22 of them being female) including one of PADI's youngest Course Directors, Holly Wakely, certified at age 21, that are now voices for the future of diving. Margo has found that "young female divers need and want to be mentored by other women." She has created a safe and fun environment for families and children in which a majority are women Instructors and Divemasters teaching and educating for Kids Sea Camp.

Fabulous Females: With valiant accolades contributing to the immense growth in the scuba industry, both Jo Mikutowicz from Divetech and Margo Peyton from Family Divers were each inaugurated into the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame on Grand Cayman this past September 28th, 2024. A special shout-out and congratulations to both of these fabulous females!



Margo Peyton Dives with Daughter Jennifer Peyton. Photo Credit: Brad Holland.

Plan Your Dive: Dive resorts and centers providing opportunities, events, and environments that create safe and comfortable attractive diving experiences for women will no doubt reap increased sales of certifications, clothing, gear, and accessories by ensuring women-friendly events are popularly attended. Gathering groups of women together with a common passion lends to observing, learning, nurturing, and development, even growing your own professional dive staff. It's inspiring to see how women-friendly events have evolved over the years since the inception of Women's Dive Day. Make sure to add this to your dive calendar for next year: **July 19th, 2025** and invite any and all, especially women divers to attend, by encouraging them to join in the comradery and celebrate by diving with you wherever you dive. Afterall, who doesn't need another excuse to go diving again?

email Linda

RETAILING

Attitude and Innovation is Everything in Future-Proofing Your Dive Business

– by Terry Cummins, OAM, Ph.D., CEO, Terrence Cummins International Business Coaching & Consultancy
Terrence (Terry) is a diver, photographer, writer, and educator and has been a senior executive of diver training agencies. Terry has a long list of prestigious awards and accomplishments, including an Order of Australia Medal for his contribution to scuba diving.



In today's world, business challenges are nothing new. Adversities like wars, economic shifts, political instability, and environmental changes have always existed. While negative factors can heavily impact businesses, success often lies in focusing on what we can control and approaching challenges with a positive mindset. Despite the challenges brought by events like COVID-19, the global economic crisis, and past recessions, certain businesses continue to thrive by adopting innovative approaches and staying optimistic.

One key to future-proofing your dive business is maintaining a positive attitude, both in personal interactions and across your marketing platforms. Negative attitudes repel customers, while positivity attracts like-minded individuals. For example, despite ongoing negative media coverage about the Great Barrier Reef, research involving over 530 certified divers revealed that most enjoyed their experience and found the coral condition better than expected. Nearly 87% of them recommended the operator, and 83% stated they would return. This illustrates that a positive outlook, rather than focusing on negative press, can enhance customer satisfaction.

Establishing and maintaining a positive attitude among staff is crucial for setting and achieving goals. Formal goal setting, especially with staff and customer involvement, strengthens business operations. Using tools like customer surveys can offer valuable insights, but be sure to keep questions open-ended to avoid biased responses. For example, asking customers how to improve their experience or encouraging feedback on new products can reveal fresh ideas.

Effective sales strategies also involve redefining how products are marketed. Advertising should include positive messaging, humor, and urgency to capture attention. When COVID-19 hit, some stores took advantage of eLearning programs, promoting dive courses with slogans like, "Stuck at home? Start your dive course today." This sense of urgency, coupled with optimism, drove customer engagement during a challenging time.

Events can generate excitement and build customer loyalty. Stores can host product launches, dive course celebrations, or even dive-themed movie nights to create buzz. One store in Cairns organized a speargun "shoot-out day" where customers tested underwater hunting gear in a pool. The event not only increased sales but also created excitement for future initiatives. Another store encouraged staff to wear shorts and t-shirts, sending a warm, inviting message to customers, even during colder months.

Collaboration with local dive clubs can further boost business. For example, the Cairns Nautilus Scuba Club organized a photo competition and exhibition that attracted over 4,500 potential customers. Such events generate interest and help operators and sponsors increase their visibility and sales.



Photo by Cathie Cummins
Mike Ball Expeditions, Cairns, Far North Queensland, Australia

Some businesses even cater to the unique needs of their customers. One dive shop, understanding that parenthood often disrupts dive activities, introduced a child-minding service where kids could participate in diving programs while their parents enjoyed diving trips. This initiative not only filled dive boats but also fostered a family-friendly atmosphere that encouraged further engagement through social events and product promotions.

In conclusion, there are numerous innovative ways to maintain a positive, forward-thinking attitude in the dive industry. Despite external challenges, diving remains a unique and exciting activity that can thrive under the most adverse conditions by focusing on the "sizzle" rather than the negativity.

email Terry

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DEMA EXHIBITORS

Exhibitor **Booth #** **(bold = advertisers or contributors)** updated 10/21/24

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10 Bar Underwater Housings	5155
2Two Labs Ltd.	2075
3qrs Lighting Systems	2143
500 PSI, Inc.	6142
A Plus Marine Supply Inc.	5098
About Australia	2109
Adelaar (PBS-Lines)	3122
ADEX	**6121**
African and Oriental Travel Co.	3026
Aggressor Adventures	**5045**
Agulhas Inc.	8195
Aiyanar Beach & Dive Resort	9105
AK Industries	8091
Alam Batu	3123
All Star Liveaboards	8045
All West Apartment & Diving	6066
Ambergris Grand Limited	2070
American Dive Company	8178
Amigos Del Mar	4101
Amira Dive & Travel AG	3120
Amoray Dive Resort	5151
Analytical Industries, Inc. a brand of PST	7095
Andean Travel Company	2049
Anguilla Tourist Board	2023
Anse Chastanet Resort & Scuba St. Lucia	**6086**
Anthony's Key Resort	3056
Aqua Edge Inc	3050
AquaLung	2203
Aquanauts Grenada	5143
Aquatex Sports Goods	5142
Aquatic Hunt	2063
Arenui Boutique Liveaboard	3117
ARF Global	8068
Armor Products, LLC	5058
Asia Luxury Cruises 4 Diving Ltd.	3137
Atenovo Garments (Yangzhou)	2024
Atlantis Philippines	4116
ATMOS Dive Computers	2170
Avelo Labs	**9122**
BA Shields	5182
Backscatter UW Video & Photo	7109
Bahamas Ministry Of Tourism	**9056**
Baja Diving and Watersports, LLC	6059
Bananarama Dive & Beach Resort	3062
Barbados Tourism Marketing, Inc.	6139
Barefoot Cay Resort & Marina	3066
Bauer Compressors, Inc	4017
Bay Islands Tourism Bureau	3060
Belize Dive Haven	4097
Belize Hotel Association	4089
Belize Pro Dive Center	4096
Belize Sea & Explore, Inc.	4090
Beneath the Sea	5096
Beqa Lagoon Resort	3101
Best Publishing Company	2124
Big Blue by Roland St. John	9075
Bigblue Dive Lights	9193
Bilikiki Cruises - Solomon Islands	3111
Bill Beard's Diving Safaris Costa Rica	2052
Black Coral Expeditions	4088
Blackbird Caye Resort	4102
Blue Bahia Resort	2198
Blue Force Diving SL	**7136**
Blue Green Expeditions	9148
Blue Horizon Solutions	**9130**
Blue Note Scuba SA DE CV	6196
Blue Ocean Art	7058
Blue Religion s.r.o.	7202
Blue Steel Scuba	4171
Bonassi USA, Inc.	5202
British Virgin Islands Tourist Board	4022
Brownie's Marine Group	5036
Brownie's Third Lung	5036
Buddy Dive Resort Bonaire	**8051**
Bunaken Oasis Dive and Spa Resort	4138
BuzoBoss, LLC	2104
Cabañas on Clark's Cay	3063
Calipso Dive Galapagos	5131
Cambridge Innovation	3113
Cane Bay Dive Shop	7073
Captain Don's Habitat	8056
Captain Jak Divers	4092
Caradonna Adventures	**3017**
Carpe Diem Maldives Pvt. Ltd.	5063
Carter Bag Inc.	2017
Casa Del Mar Cozumel	3033
Casco Bay Molding Ltd.	9074
CAYAGO Americas Inc.	6176
Cayman Airways Ltd.	7061
Cayman Islands Department of Tourism	7063
Chin Kung Titech Company	5129
Chogogo Dive & Beach Resort	8062
Chuuk Visitors Bureau	2021
Clearly Cayman Dive Resorts	**7067**
Clearwater Paradise Resort	3067
Cliff Weil, Inc.	4074
Club Cantamar and Liveaboard Fleet	4049
COARE	6096
Coco View Resort	3073
Coda Octopus Products Inc.	9099
Coltri Compressors	**8157**
Coral Restoration Foundation	5144
Corallium Hotel & Villa	8064
Costa Rica Divers	5133
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Cylinder Training Services	8094
Dark Scuba	7122
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Deep Blue Adventures	**4068**
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Delfins Beach Resort Bonaire	8061
DEMA Central	**5233**
DEMA Show Sales Office	**9222**
Dewi Nusantara	3140
Dirty Dozen Expeditions Inc.	8089
Dive 1st Aid	4121
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Dive Friends Bonaire	8059
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Dive Industry Foundation	2050
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Dive into Indonesia	3131
Dive Lantern	9115
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Dive Paradise	8129
Dive Pirates Foundation	5183
Dive Provo	7071
Dive Rite	6087
Dive Shades	6149
Dive Shop 360	8087
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Dive Talk LLC	9088
DiveAssure	7037
Diveheart	5089
DiveNewswire	**6068**
Diventures LLC	**2091**
DivePhotoGuide.com	**2092**
Diveplanit Travel Pty Ltd.	3110
Divers Alert Network (DAN)	**3036**
DiveVolk	8125
Dive-Xtras Inc.	7110
Divi Flamingo Beach Resort & Casino	8057
Diving Buddy Corporation	5194
Diving Unlimited International, Inc.	5057
Doc's Proplugs, Inc.	5074
Dominica (& Ft. Young Hotel)	**6132**
Dominican Republic Tourism Board	8069
Dongguan Aloma Industrial	2148
Dongguan Jinye Sports Apparatus	4183
Dongguan Kuyou Sports Goods	2153
Dongguan SVS Sports Goods	4136
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Dream Soaps	5030
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ECO Divers	3129
Edge Hog Dive Gear	9129
Egyptian Cruising Company	2151
Elite Adventures Belize, Ltd.	4102

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EncomPos Software LLC 2033
ESTBC Prints 9181
EvoLogistics North America 2098
Evolve USA LLC 5184
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Fairway making cleaning easy 6049
Fenides Liveaboard 2140
Fiji Airways 3089
Fins Attached 2045
Fish 'n Fins 3020
Fisheye 7115
Fly & Sea Dive Adventures 7142
Fog-X 2065
Foshan Weefine Technology 9117
Fothergill Polycom 5145
Four Seasons Explorer Palau 5135
Fourth Element 6097
Fuvahmulah Dive School 4140
Galapagos Galaxy Diver Liveaboard 2051
Galapagos Sky 4051
Garden Island Resort 3099
Garmin International 8097
Gear Aid 7203
Georgia Aquarium, Inc. 4135
Goby Divers and WaterSports 4060
Golden Rock Dive & Nature Resort 6133
GoPro 3149
Grand Park Royal Cozumel 5208
Grand Windsock Bonaire 8063
Grateful Diver 8193
Grenada Tourism Authority 6137
Guardian Scuba 2036
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Hong Kong Panda International 7121
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HuiZhou HuaDing Sports Goods 2019
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IST Sports Corp 3045
IWP N.V., Int. Watersports Products 2204
Jako Chemicals 8149
JBL International 2025
Jean-Michel Cousteau Fiji Resort 3100
Jewelry Haven 6145
Joydiving 2120
Juliet Sailing & Diving 4059
JW Fishers Mfg Inc. 2020
Karang Divers 3141
Keldan GmbH 8120
Key Largo Dive Center 5193
Kids Sea Camp Inc. 6051
Kimpton Grand Roatan Resort & Spa 2073
Kolt Co. Ltd. 8198
Kosrae Nautilus Resort 3025
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La Paz Tourism Board 6207
LASO Technologies, LLC 9124
Lead Enterprises Inc. 3048
Leaderfins 3192
Lefeet HK Co., Limited 4176
Lembeh Resort 3116
Lionfish University 2108
Lita's Natural Insect Repellent 5095
Liu Ying International 8136
Lotus Hotel Pte Ltd. 2129
Luxury Yacht Maldives by Albatros Top Boat 5138
LW Americas 5036
M/Y Seaduction Red Sea Liveaboard Egypt 4134
MAC SRL 3186
Maduro Dive 3030
Manta Pacific Research Foundation 2090
Manta Ray Bay Resort & Yap Divers 3018
Manthiri Maldives 4075
Maputo Dive Center Limitada 2066
Marco Vincent Dive Resort 2103
Marelux Precision Inc. 7125
Marine Sports Mfg. 6170
Master Liveaboards 7137
Max-Air 4056
Mayan Princess Beach & Dive Resort 3074
Mexican Caribbean 5201
Mexico Liveaboards 4026
Mods Drysuit 7135
Mosaico LLC 4131
MS Compressors, Ltd. 2150
Multinational 5171
NAD-Lembeh Resort 8123
NAI'A Fiji 3090
Nam Liong (USA) Inc. 5048
Nardi Compressori Srl. 8096
Narwhal Technology (Dongguan) 6199
Nat. Marine Sanctuary Foundation 2123
Nat Speleological Society Cave Diving Section 7090
NAUI Worldwide 7017
Nauticam 8114
Nautilus Liveaboards 5149
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Newtrans Overseas, Inc. 2056
NEX Underwater Products 4157
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Nokta Muhendislik AS 9095
Northwest Florida Beaches 8135
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Ocean Encounters Diving 6065
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OCG Creative, LLC 6143
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Papua New Guinea Divers Assn. Inc. 3102
Paradise Hotels & Resorts, SA 3064
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Poseidon Dive Adventures 4052
Poseidon Diving Systems 8103
Prescription Dive Masks Inc 5072
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Pro Dive International 6148
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Professional Scuba Inspectors, Inc. 2030
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PSS Worldwide 6180
PT Meridian Capital Marine Tourism Enterprises 3144
PT Mocean Dive Resort 2141
PT Ocean Explorers 3136
PT Papua Diving 3142
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PT Safari Megah Sejahtera Indonesia 3124
PT Velocean Marina Indonesia 3145
PT. Bahari Anja Sejahtera 3132
PT. Four Kings Cruises 3134

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QBAS	5123
Quest Dive Adventures	5137
Quest Metal Detectors	9128
Quetzal Liveaboard Expeditions	2094
RAID US LLC	3196
Rainbow Reef Dive Center	7025
Ramon's Village Resort	4098
Raw Love Sunscreen	5180
Reef & Rainforest	4108
Reef Check Foundation	2187
REEF - Reef Environmental Education Foundation	4061
RescueGear, Inc	9157
Riffe International Inc.	7195
Rinn Stitches	2059
Rip Tie Enterprises LLC	3194
Riptide	3177
Roatan Charter	3072
Rork Media Limited	3157
Rum Reggae	6144
Safety Lab Plus, Inc.	2048
Saint Lucia Tourism Authority	6135
Salvimar Srl.	7149
Samambaia Liveaboard	3125
Sandy Point Resorts	4101
Saphire Dive & Travel, Corp	7130
Sau Bay Resort & Spa	3098
Scandi Divers	7124
Scuba Diving Industry Magazine by Cline Group	**8075**
Scuba Educators International	**4031**
Scuba Shop	2069
Scuba Stik LLC	6098
Scuba Travel Ventures	6128
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Scubalinx LLC	2068
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Scubaspa Indonesia	3150
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Scubatron, Inc.	8074
Sea Breeze Trading Limited	4142
Sea Experience, Inc.	7052
Sea Fear	9171
Sea Saba	4028
Sea Save Foundation	6109
Sea Shepherd Conservation Society	2110
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SEACAM	7108
SeaLife	7043
Shark Stop Australia Pty Ltd.	2046
Shearwater Research Inc.	7103
SHEICO Group (Shei Chung Hsin Ind.)	4025
Shenzhen Dedepu Technology	2031
Shenzhen Jaunt Outdoor Products	8151
Shenzhen Kaichengyi Technology	7112
Shenzhen N. Jason Industrial	9149
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Shenzhen Seaskin Sports Goods	5177
Shenzhen ShengHong Sporting Goods Co., Ltd	2058
Shenzhen Skywoods Lighting Technology Co. Ltd.	4203
Shenzhen Songxin Sports Products	5192
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SK Manufacturing Co., Ltd	7209
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South Pacific Island Travel	3023
Spacefish Army	4149
Spare Air	5036
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Spyderco, Inc	6092
St Helena Tourism	3028
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Strømsholmen Sjøsportsenter	5197
Sub Oceanic Maldives	9073
SubGravity	9123
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SunBreeze Hotel	4087
Sunset Bay Lodge, LLC	3069
Suqian Baishijie Sports Goods	4133
Surf-Fur	3177
Suunto Oy	8197
Tabata USA, Inc.	8029
Tahiti Tourisme North America	3086
Tank'd Pro Dive Center Utila	3052
Tasik Divers Indonesia	3130
Tecline USA	2061
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TEMC - DE-OX	5103
The Duck Company	9151
The Human Diver	2212
The LZK Group, LLC	7157
The Pearl Resort	3094
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Tobago Tourism Agency Limited	6136
Tourism Corporation Bonaire TCB	**8058**
Tourism Fiji	3087
Tourism Seychelles	2128
Tourism Solomons	3109
Travel Insurance Center	2137
Tricks of the Trade, Inc.	7193
Trident Diving Equipment	2026
Triton Diving Equipment Corp.	3199
Triton's Realm	6192
Trogir Dive Center	9148
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Tsun Kuang Hardware Mfg. Co. Ltd.	6073
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U.S. JaClean	4143
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Ultimate Creations	6156
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Undersea Hunter	6109
Underwater Kinetics	7031
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Unified Team Diving	7099
Unique Travel Corp.	9068
United Airlines	3022
UseMyFrame, Inc.	4195
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Valentina Liveaboard	6203
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Vid Adventures Travel. Inc	6154
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Villa on Dunbar Rock	3061
VIP Diving Bonaire	8065
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Volivoli Beach Resort	3095
VyraSage	2060
Waidroka Bay Resort	3097
Wakatobi Dive Resort	5097
Wallacea Dive Cruise	3139
Wanderlust Hats LLC	8192
Waternauts Dive Center	5206
Water-Pro Sports Company	6131
Waterproof Diving Int.	6193
Watershed	7087
Well Marine Diver Enterprise	3170
WeTravel Inc.	5196
Whites Drywear	6157
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World Dive Adventures	7075
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X-Ray Magazine	**4065**
XS Scuba	**7185**
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Zhong Qian (GZ) Aquatic Sports Equipment Co., Ltd	5195

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Beyond the excitement of the Show Floor, DEMA Show 2024 provides a dynamic array of learning opportunities, enhancing the overall value for our attendees. Browse the DEMA Show Features and Education Schedule and scan the QR code to learn more and start planning your DEMA Show experience today!



AUTHOR'S CORNER
Booth #5233 (DEMA Central)
Enjoy the exclusive opportunity to meet and interact with some of the top authors in our industry. You'll get to immerse yourself in hearing firsthand about their exploits, glean insights from their adventures and even acquire signed copies of their books!

DEMA CENTRAL
Booth #5233
While exploring the Show Floor, be sure to stop by DEMA Central to take advantage of valuable resources, secure members-only savings and shop in the DEMA store. While there, you can also join or renew your DEMA membership and receive an exclusive onsite gift!

DEMA MEMBER LOUNGES
VIP Member Lounge: Booth #9202
Member Lounge: Booth #9208
Unwind, recharge and connect with fellow DEMA Members in a private sanctuary conveniently located on the Show Floor. *Member ribbons are required for entry and can be obtained at DEMA Central.*

PROP 65 CONSULTATIONS
Booth #S233 (DEMA Central)
To help you navigate the complexities surrounding Proposition 65, DEMA Show is offering complimentary private meetings with an attorney who specializes in the matter. Open to all DEMA Show participants. Schedule online today!

DEMA SHOW UNDERSEA GRAND PRIX
Throughout Show Floor
Compete to win! The Treasure Hunt returns to the DEMA Show 2024 experience. This epic quest has been reimagined — and fittingly renamed the Undersea Grand Prix. Open to all attendees who visit the Show Floor, those who successfully complete the course will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win some incredible prizes.

DESTINATION PAVILIONS
Throughout Show Floor
Explore an exciting showcase of the world's best diving and travel destinations, where you'll immerse yourself in the unique underwater landscapes, marine life and diving cultures of destinations spanning the globe. Beyond exploring unique products and services, these pavilions foster cultural exchange and collaboration, where visitors enjoy lively discussions, share experiences and learn about the traditions and customs shaping diving practices in different parts of the world.

EXHIBITOR-OFFERED SAVINGS & SPECIALS
Get a sneak peek at some of the special savings being offered by exhibitors to Show attendees! *Visit demashow.com to see the most up-to-date list of Show exclusives and special savings waiting for you in Las Vegas!*

FIRST-TIME EXHIBITORS CENTER
Booths #2056–2069
Visit DEMA Show's newest exhibitors, discover what sets them apart and unlock valuable resources to boost your business endeavors. While there, you'll forge fresh connections, cultivate relationships, and delve into their products and services!

NEW PRODUCT SHOWCASE
Along Left Main Aisle
Discover the hottest new products and technologies coming to market from DEMA Show exhibitors! Look for the display cases along the east main aisle and visit the brands behind the products to talk one-on-one with the companies bringing them to market!

POWER-UP! iCAFÉ
Booth #5233 (DEMA Central)
Sponsored by United Airlines.

The Power-Up! Internet Café (located at DEMA Central) is available for the convenience of all of our guests while on the Show Floor.

SILENT AUCTION
Booth #5233 (DEMA Central)
Place your bids on industry collectibles, equipment, artwork, travel packages, apparel and more, generously donated by DEMA Show exhibitors. Items will be on display and open for bidding during the first three (3) days of DEMA Show. All monies received from the auction will go to support DEMA's Member Assistance Programs, helping those who need it most in our industry.

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RESOURCE CENTER SNAPSHOT SESSIONS
Booth #8109
From uncovering the latest gear and techniques to gaining valuable tools to amplify your business strategy, this is a great way to glean insights from the convenience of the Show Floor. *Image Resource Center and Technical Diving Resource Center sessions are co-located and will take place in the Resource Center Snapshot Session area (Booth #8109).*

DEMA-SPONSORED EDUCATION *at-a-glance*

All DEMA Show 2024 education will take place in person at the Las Vegas Convention Center. Seminar dates, times and locations are subject to change. Visit demashow.com/education for more info.

NOTE: SESSIONS SHADED IN BLUE ARE OPEN TO ALL

● STAFF AND STORE ● THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX ● CUSTOMER OUTREACH ● ONLINE MARKETING

TIME	TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19		WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20		THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21		FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22
8:30 AM–9:45 AM	Make 'Em Laugh: Using AI to Add Humor to Your Content Beth Ziesenis *Room S231*		**DEMA Member Update and Annual Meeting** Tom Ingram *Room S232*		Building Dive Industry Stewardship and Boosting Revenue through Voluntourism in Coral Restoration Roxane Boonstra *Room S231*		Proposition 65 Affects EVERYONE in the Diving Industry Ryan Landis *Room S231*
10:00 AM–10:45 AM	● Finding Your Authentic AI Voice Beth Ziesenis *Room S231*	● Why Did I Buy That? Tips to Enhance Your Inventory Planning Skills Anne Obarski *Room S232*	● Store Displays for Days! Georganne Bender *Room S231*	● Dive Into the Data: Maximizing Sales and Customer Connections Using Dive Business Data Lynn Switanowski *Room S232*	● Small Businesses Don't Die, They Just Commit Suicide! Tom Shay *Room S231*	● How to Embrace Generation Z as Students and Staff Tec Clark *Room S232*	Decoding Congress: How Politics Shape the Dive Industry Emily Coyle *Room S231*
11:00 AM–11:45 AM	● Growing Your Dive Business Through Experiential Education Tec Clark *Room S231*	● 5 Tips for Generating and Responding to Online Reviews Steve Huskey *Room S232*	● Hacking YouTube, Attracting Younger Divers: Tips and Tricks You Won't Find Online Steve Huskey *Room S231*	● Connect. Profit. Repeat.: How to Create Personal Connections that Grow Your Business Cathryn Castle Garcia *Room S232*	● Search Engine Optimization Using AI Steve Huskey *Room S231*	● Watching Your Wallet: Practical Approaches for Managing Expense and Improving Cash Flow in Your Dive Center Jeffrey Cinciripino *Room S232*	
12:00 PM–12:45 PM	● Beyond the Sales Floor: How Savvy Retailers Connect with Their Communities Georganne Bender *Room S231*	● Evaluate Your Store 360 Degrees: Deliver an Astonishing Experience at Every Touchpoint Anne Obarski *Room S232*	● Seamless Depths: Merging Dive Experiences with Digital Innovation Jennifer Shaheen *Room S231*	● Where Has All the Profit Gone? Identifying (and Eliminating) Hidden Expenses that Are Draining Your Profit Potential Lynn Switanowski *Room S232*	● How to Put Sizzle on Your Sales Floor Tom Shay *Room S231*	● Developing a Loyalty Program Paul Howe *Room S232*	
1:00 PM–2:15 PM	Anchoring Customer Loyalty: Secrets to Sustaining Success in the Dive Industry Jennifer Shaheen *Room S231*		Generation Z Panel Discussion Tec Clark *Room S231*		Behind the Scenes with Hollywood Icons and Diving Industry Stuntwomen: Liz Parkinson and Mehgan Heaney-Grier Liz Parkinson; Mehgan Heaney-Grier; Moderated by Greg Hold *Room S231*		
3:00 PM–3:45 PM	● 10 Power Ideas to Keep Your Customers Close Georganne Bender *Room S231*	● Social Media for Shop Owners: Small Moves Online that Make Big Waves in Revenue Christy McFerren *Room S232*	● Making a Splash on TikTok: Dive Business Edition Jennifer Shaheen *Room S231*	● Connect. Profit. Repeat. Part Two: How to Create Productive B2B Connections that Grow Your Business Cathryn Castle Garcia *Room S232*	● Creating a Positive Cashflow with an "Open-to-Buy" Tom Shay *Room S231*	● Advertising Strategies, Budgeting and Evaluation Paul Howe *Room S232*	

Schedule subject to change. Visit demashow.com for full info and a complete up-to-date schedule.

FOR COMPLETE DETAILS, VISIT DEMASHOW.COM

ISDHF 2024 UPDATE

A Memorable Celebration: The Cayman Islands International Hall of Fame Ceremony

– by Amber Wagenknecht, Executive Editor and Reporter on the Beach, Grand Cayman



Attending the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in Grand Cayman on Sept 28th was not just an event; it was an honor that resonated deeply with my passion for the ocean and its preservation. Set against the stunning backdrop of turquoise waters and sunlit shores, this ceremony was a celebration of individuals who have dedicated their lives to exploring and protecting the marine environment.

Scuba diving enthusiasts, professionals, and ocean advocates from around the world gathered to pay tribute to the honorees—individuals whose contributions to the sport and the ocean community are truly inspiring. Each inductee brought their unique story, demonstrating unwavering commitment to the underwater world. Their achievements ranged from pioneering new diving techniques to leading conservation efforts that protect fragile marine ecosystems.





Listening to the stories of the honorees was a powerful reminder of why we dive - passion. Their words resonated with all of us, igniting a collective responsibility to advocate for and protect our oceans. It was a call to action, a reminder that each dive is an opportunity to connect with the marine world and contribute to its preservation.

The camaraderie among attendees was palpable. Strangers exchanged smiles and stories, united by a shared love for diving and the ocean. I found myself engaging in conversations with seasoned divers and aspiring enthusiasts alike, all eager to learn from one another and share their experiences. This sense of community is one of the most enriching aspects of the diving culture; it transcends geographical boundaries and fosters friendships that often last a lifetime.



Each honoree expressed gratitude not only for the recognition but also for the support they had received from the diving community throughout their journeys. Their humility was inspiring, showcasing that the true honor lies not just in individual accomplishments but in the collaborative spirit that drives us all to dive deeper, learn more, and advocate tirelessly for our oceans.



The International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony was more than just a recognition of achievement; it was a celebration of passion, dedication, and the bonds formed in the pursuit of underwater exploration.

Hosted and sponsored by the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, the 24-year old ceremony is a one-of-a-kind experience in the diving world. Four international inductees and four local honorees were added to the impressive list of past inductees including Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Dr. Sylvia Earle and other diving royalty, a list too long to mention here (see isdhf.com).

Leaving Grand Cayman, I carried with me not just memories of an unforgettable evening, but also a strengthened commitment to the values that unite us all as divers. The word *passion* was mentioned by William Cline, the Executive Director of the ISDHF, and there was no better place to see the passion of diving than in Grand Cayman this past weekend. The honor of attending this ceremony reaffirmed my belief in the importance of community and advocacy in our shared love for the ocean.

email Amber

BUSINESS EDU

Tips from Former Owners – Part Four for Selling Your Business

– by Dean Hollis, Founder of Diventures, Omaha, NE



Over the last few issues, we have shared advice on deciding if you should sell your dive business, preparing for a sale, and communicating a change in ownership. Now we want to share some helpful tips from prior dive shop owners who sold to Diventures.

These prior owners built longstanding dive businesses and we're very grateful for the chance to carry on their legacy.

Doug McNeese, former owner of The Dive Shop in Memphis, TN, Little Rock, AR, and Marietta, GA, on factors in the decision to sell.

"If you are considering selling your business, ask yourself one question. If you passed away tomorrow what would your business be worth? For most dive centers heavily reliant on the owner, the cold, hard truth is not much.

Remember selling is not just about finding the right opportunity, it's about handling the opportunity right. This is not a hard sell, it's a heart sell! It's more than just the money, your life's work is about the legacy you want to leave. So, finding the right people to continue and grow that legacy is key.

After 61 years, my focus was preserving the legacy of our business with a robust company and leadership, ensuring the well-being of our staff and customers. Have there been hiccups during the transition? I would be lying if I said no, but such challenges are expected when merging operations. Remember, change is hard, but change is inevitable. Two years later we are convinced we made the right decision. Good luck!"

Rick Sass, former owner of Sub-Aquatics Sports & Service in Battle Creek, MI, on finding the right fit for your customer base.

"Selling a business for most dive store owners is a 'one and done' experience. It was for us. Our entire goal was to turn over the 'keys' to an organization that would allow us to seamlessly pass our customers to a dive store with similar values and goals.

Diventures has an extensive travel program which complemented what we were offering at our store. In the big picture, they are a good fit. However, your business is like raising a child. They grow up, move on, and in this case, marry into a fine 'family.' You should expect that things will be done differently. You should also expect that watching as an observer can be a challenge!

Our passion for travel has always been our reason for diving. Kim & I still are Trip Leaders for Diventures, and we are happy to be involved and actively diving. More importantly, our local community still has a dive store!"

Don Peterson, former owner of Aquasports in Springfield, MO, on staying involved after a sale.

"In October of 2010, I met Dean Hollis in my store. I was 65 years old and had been planning on selling the business for about four months. After visiting Diventures in Omaha, I knew Dean was the one to take over my store, which we had owned for 34 years. He promised me he would take care of our business and our customers and build a new state-of-the-art facility in Springfield. That is exactly what he has done.

The best part of this for me is I get to do what I love, teach others to dive and travel. This was a great decision for us and I believe an even better one for our old and new customers. Today the new store is busy teaching swimming and scuba classes and it is a pleasure to work with Dean and the team at Diventures."

Chelsea Foster, current Diventures team member and daughter of former owners of SeaVentures in Alpharetta, GA, on finding resources and support.

"When my parents were considering selling their business, I knew I wanted to have a big role in it and in continuing to build the dive community in Atlanta. They had run a successful shop together for 30 years.

There are always challenges in this industry and running a shop by myself was a big worry. As part of Diventures, I'm able to lead our store in Atlanta, but I don't have to do it alone. I have great resources and am surrounded by a team I can rely on. The support from finance, payroll, marketing, and merchandising helps us be successful and focus our time on the customer."

Want to discuss business opportunities or your exit strategy with Diventures? We will be at DEMA, booth #2091. Come see us or reach out directly. It's never too early to start thinking about your long-term plan.

email Dean

By EV Marketing Operations

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