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***MarylandBoaters.com* to Boost Maryland's Marine Industry**

MarylandBoaters.com debuts one-stop-shop for boating activities and services.

September 15, 2009 (Annapolis) – The centuries-old maritime industry of Maryland has launched into the information age with a comprehensive website designed to answer all of a recreational boater's needs.

The state's Marine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM) in conjunction with Vantage Strategy Consulting has designed the website as the ultimate resource for the state's approximately \$2.5 billion dollar recreational boating industry. The announcement was made during the 30th annual Marine Trades Association of Maryland's fall conference today in Annapolis with 110 marine professionals in attendance. "Whether you are in need of a major repair or a three hour tour on the water, this site will be an important one-stop-shop for every boater that visits Maryland," said Susan Zeller, MTAM's Executive Director.

The new online guide features an interactive map and business listings to provide boating enthusiasts every aspect of boating information in Maryland.

MarylandBoaters.com features a wide range of local Maryland businesses assembled by category including, repair services, marinas, boat sales locations, and other professional services such as boat insurance. A guide to boat ramps and fuel docks are two of the first applications on the site.

"Centralizing these businesses aggregates local solutions for boaters into an easy to browse, searchable resource, said Zeller, We are especially enthusiastic about Maryland-based marine businesses looking to establish a web presence for themselves or perhaps promoting their own goods and services through multi-page micro-sites." Having such a diverse amount of information readily available from a single source is the primary goal of the new website.

In addition to resources for boaters in port, *MarylandBoaters.com* has partnered with "Chesapeake Bay Magazine's Cruising Guide to the Chesapeake" to provide content on where boaters can go for fun, fishing and relaxation There will also be links to tourism sites and navigation information to get to those destinations by water. The site is prepared to answer the myriad questions from today's recreational boater, from where

the fish are biting to whether there is a regatta going on that day. The site will even let you know where a dog owner can land to walk their dog.

"MarylandBoaters.com is a great platform for large and small local businesses to develop a web presence." said Michael Pusateri, CEO of Vantage Strategy, the firm that developed the site, "So while we are helping the boating consumer in every way possible, the website will also increase exposure and drive sales for the businesses."

Approximately 20,000 boaters visit Maryland every year in addition to the 206,000 Maryland registered boaters and the number of boaters who have the technology to search the internet while under way is increasing every year. "People are increasingly using the web to plan for just about everything, said Zellers, *"MarylandBoaters.com* will be a single online resource for the Maryland boater whether planning weeks in advance or looking for an immediate repair."

To help launch the website, MTAM announced a YouTube contest that invites any boater around the world to post video that best describes "What I Like Best About Boating in Maryland." Interested parties are asked to post their videos entitled "What I like Best About Boating in Maryland" to <http://marylandboaters.com/contest>. The contest will run from September 15 through to October 15 and submitted videos will air at the annual Annapolis Boat Shows beginning on October 8th. The winner will be selected by a panel of judges from MTAM, Vantage Strategy and the Annapolis Boat Shows. Three winners will be selected and receive one of three prizes; a Windjammer Sailing Vacation aboard the Arabella donated by Atlantic Stars Hotels and Cruises, a 4-hour "Learn to Sail" private lesson for three that is donated by Chesapeake Sailing School, and a three-day bareboat yacht charter aboard a 39' two-cabin sailing yacht donated by Annapolis Bay Charters.

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