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Surf Expo Launches The Underwater Hub for January 2027 Show

New dedicated destination brings dive and snorkel brands, education, product discovery and business opportunities together in one place

ORLANDO, Fla. – November 10, 2026 – Surf Expo will debut The Underwater Hub at its January 6-8, 2027 show at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. The new destination gives one of watersports' fastest-growing categories a home of its own, where retailers can discover new products, connect with leading brands, gain category insights and write orders, all in one place.

"Dive and snorkel are coming to the surface at Surf Expo," said Adam Kingston, Vice President and Brand Director of Surf Expo. "This category has real momentum, and our retailers are ready for it. The two largest markets at the show, Florida and the Caribbean, are also among the most concentrated dive and snorkel destinations in the world. It's a perfect match. We're thrilled to give this category a dedicated home on the show floor, allowing buyers to see the gear, learn from experts and meet the brands driving its growth."

Built on Strong Industry Momentum

The launch follows strong results from dive and snorkel exhibitors at Surf Expo's 2026 shows, where brands exhibiting together reported strong buyer traffic and meaningful order writing. The Dive Industry Foundation also exhibited in the area, further highlighting growing interest in the category among Surf Expo attendees.

“It was a pleasure exhibiting again at Surf Expo in September,” said Gene Muchanski of the Dive Industry Foundation. “Dive Industry Foundation found it advantageous being in an area with HEAD Watersports, Cressi, Scuba Diving International, RIFFE International, and GUARDIAN. Surf Expo’s reputation as a youthful, watersports lifestyle buying event is helping to shape the diving industry’s future direction.”

Interest in dive-related education was also evident at the September 2026 show, where SDI – Scuba Diving International and HEAD Watersports each hosted well-attended sessions on breath-hold techniques and water safety. Designed for surfers, paddlers, kayakers, divers and other active water participants, the sessions covered real-world breath-hold strategies, water safety fundamentals and guided training techniques to build confidence and composure in challenging conditions, from big-wave hold-downs to turbulent water. The strong turnout demonstrated the crossover appeal between dive and Surf Expo’s broader watersports community.

Three Ways to Experience The Underwater Hub

The new destination will feature three key components:

Education Stage featuring presentations, product demonstrations and expert-led sessions designed to help retailers strengthen and expand their dive and snorkel offerings

Product Showcase highlighting new and best-selling products from participating brands.

Exhibitor Booths surrounding the stage and showcase, allowing buyers to move seamlessly from education and product discovery to brand meetings and order writing.

Featured Exhibitors

Companies currently committed to the area in January include Cressi, GUARDIAN Snorkeling & Swim, Hawaii Divers LLC, HEAD Watersports, RIFFE International, Dive Industry Foundation, and Scuba Diving International (SDI).

Why Dive and Snorkel Matter Now

Diving has evolved well beyond traditional scuba to include snorkeling, freediving, spearfishing, swimming and other water-based activities, and the category continues to expand beyond traditional dive shops. Masks, fins, snorkel sets, freediving gear, watersports accessories and swim products are increasingly natural additions for surf shops, beach stores, resort shops, marinas, watersports dealers, sporting goods retailers and fishing supply stores, many of which are already part of the Surf Expo buyer community. Retailers attending Surf Expo are uniquely positioned to capitalize on this crossover demand.

New Opportunities for Dive and Snorkel Brands

The Underwater Hub gives dive and snorkel brands direct access to qualified buyers from across the coastal and watersports market. By placing the category within Surf Expo's broader marketplace, where retailers can discover new products, compare brands side by side and place orders directly on the show floor, participating brands can connect with both established dive accounts and new retail channels looking to expand their water lifestyle offerings.

Hawaii Divers LLC reported strong results at the September 2026 show, its first under new ownership.

"Surf Expo was an excellent event for Hawaii Divers and Salt Life," said Jean-Pierre deBruin of Hawaii Divers LLC. "This was our first Expo under the new company, and we were extremely pleased with the results. We received outstanding feedback on our products, generated more than $50,000 in orders and experienced strong interest throughout the show. Salt Life brought significant attention to our booth, while Hawaii Divers became an additional purchase on nearly 80% of the orders placed. Our new Kai Mask and Combo were particularly well received."

He added, "The Surf Expo team created a valuable platform for us to introduce our brands, strengthen existing relationships and connect with new retail partners. We look forward to returning in January 2027 with an expanded presence."

For Cressi, the show is also about community.

“Cressi appreciates Surf Expo for their ongoing support and collaboration in growing the snorkel, freediving and scuba diving industry,” said Theo Knevel, National Scuba Division Manager, Cressi. “Surf Expo allows brands like Cressi to connect with the watersports community, showcase our innovations and reunite with industry partners. We look forward to seeing everyone again.”

Retailers can register to attend free of charge before the show; onsite registration is $35. For exhibiting and registration information, visit surfexpo.com

About Surf Expo

Surf Expo is the largest and longest-running watersports and coastal lifestyle trade show in the world. Produced twice annually in January and September, Surf Expo draws buyers from stores across the U.S., the Caribbean, Central and South America and around the world. The show features hundreds of apparel and hardgoods brands, a full lineup of events, networking opportunities and more. Surf Expo is a trade-only event for exhibiting manufacturers, qualified retailers and approved media; it is not open to the public. For more information, visit www.surfexpo.com

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