

THE DIVE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

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World View

NETWORK SERIES

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DIVE LOCAL

Dive Industry Message
To Local Divers

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Outstanding Divemaster
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EDITOR'S GREETING

Welcome to the May 2024 edition of *The Dive Industry Professional*. As a Trade Publication dedicated to Dive Industry Professionals, we are expanding our marketing reach as we continue to improve our *Daily Blog*, *Weekly News* press release service, monthly trade magazine *The Dive Industry Professional*, and our annual *Trade Directory & Buyers Guide*. Our goal is to increase the readership of our publications in order to raise the bar of business professionalism and to *Build a Better Industry* for the entire Global Diving Community.

Our Trade Magazine, *The Dive Industry Professional* is dedicated to the professional advancement of Dive Industry Professionals worldwide. Our mission is to bring buyers & sellers together by the increasing usage of 21st century marketing tools and technologies. We look forward to collaborating and working closely with our members and industry partners to bring you the best business of diving articles to help advance your career in the recreational diving industry.

In this month's issue we begin with our editorial, ***Creating a Dive Industry World View***. The way the diving industry sees the world of diving is based on our heredity, environment, education, and experience. Since that differs from individual to individual across the board, we all seem to have a different world view of the recreational diving industry. It's because we don't see things as they are. We see them as we are. The best way to gain a true perspective of the diving industry is to do our research, describe the industry as it is, and present that image to the global diving community. Our Network Series article entitled; ***Create Your Own Supply Support Network*** expands on our past article about creating your own circle of influence. We show you how to create a supply network that supports the programs, products, and services you have influence with.

This issue brings back our ***Outstanding Divemaster Award***. We had the pleasure of having Taylor Matevich as our Divemaster two weeks ago in Cozumel and were very impressed with the way she performed in her role of Lead Divemaster. We are starting a new DIVE LOCAL Series entitled ***Dive Industry Message to Local Divers***. Our introduction article spells out what we will be covering in the next four articles about our unified marketing message to the diving community. To grow our recreation and serve the current diver population we are showing divers how to learn to dive, buy their gear, go diving, and stay active. This is an exciting series to write about because it ties in with our concept of creating a more accurate and transparent world view of the recreational diving industry. And finally, our Shows & Events column brings you upcoming events for 2024 and into 2025. ***Enjoy the read.***

Gene Muchanski
Editor
The Dive Industry Professional

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Trade Publication

The Dive Industry Professional
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“GIVE THEM A WEEK THEY WILL REMEMBER FOREVER”



Photo Shaun The Sheep by Kewin Lorenzen

**AT KIDS SEA CAMP THE DAYS ARE SO FULL
THAT WE GO TO BED COUNTING SHEEP!**

SEE STORIES ON PAGES 58-61

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EDITORIAL



Creating a Dive Industry World View

by Gene Muchanski, Editor
The Dive Industry Professional

I learned a long time ago that ***We don't see things as they are – We see them as we are.*** You might say that's a little philosophically deep for a Dive Industry Professional to be writing about, but when you think about it, that statement explains why we have so many problems with marketing communications in our industry. ***A world view is the way we see the world.*** The way individuals see the world is based on a combination of their heredity, environment, education, and experience. Every individual on the planet may see things a little differently, based on their individual uniqueness. Based on the things that we see, feel, read, learn, and experience (our inputs), our world view is forever changing. When our world view adapts, grows, or changes, the things we communicate (our outputs) change accordingly.

Creating a unified world view of the recreational diving industry is something the Global Diving Community would benefit from greatly. Creating a unified world view is not a complicated or difficult undertaking. It just requires an initial commitment and a daily focus on defining the recreational diving industry as it is and explaining how it functions. It is important to recognize that we are not trying to change a person's world view or the way they process information, but we can educate the Global Diving Community about the Global Diving Business Network and let individuals experience the diving industry for themselves. With additional education and experience, divers and the general public will have a clearer understanding of the true dive industry world view. Whether you and

your business are included in their world view of the diving industry is up to you.

Currently in the recreational diving industry, we receive our information from countless individual sources. There is no shortage of data about the diving industry and the programs, products, and services that are sold by the dive equipment manufacturers, training agencies, travel companies and lifestyle product producers. We continually get input from magazines and their advertisers, in both print and digital formats, from social media, internet communications, websites, emails, catalogs, and in-person at trade and consumer dive shows. I don't know how many companies are bombarding their customers with their monthly newsletters and daily email advertisements, but if your email in-box is anything like mine, it's way too many. As a Trade Association, we are on the mailing lists of hundreds of diving businesses. Somehow, we learned how to penetrate their limited circle of influence and get on their mailing list. With that said, we get way too many emails from a few. We get a few emails from many. Surprisingly enough, we never get any correspondence from the vast majority of diving businesses. Most of the correspondence we receive is not educational or informative in nature. It is usually correspondence with a request to buy something. The critical flaw with this type of correspondence is that the messages are sent out to everyone on their list, with no regard to the receiver's demographic or their need for the item offered for sale. It is the classical shotgun approach, shooting at the flock, with the hope of hitting a single bird. From a professional marketing standpoint, these companies are sending out requests for someone to buy their products, not knowing if the target audience has a need, want, or desire for their product.

The Dive Industry Association is in the business of bringing buyers and sellers together. We are students of the industry, and we know how products flow from creation to consumption, through the supply and demand channels of distribution. We have identified the sellers of diving and diving related programs, products, and services and we work with them to acquire, retain, and sell to qualified buyers. We use an integrated marketing approach of working with Dive Industry Professionals in the supply and demand chains. On a consulting basis we have worked with demand side businesses to attract and sell to key buyers. As a public service to the industry, we created a

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[Trade Directory & Buyers Guide](#) for buyers and sellers. As a public service to the 1,100 + Retail Dive Centers in the United States we have created and actively maintain a website directory of all active retail dive stores that can be accessed for free by the consuming public. Our Dive Store Directory is published on www.divelocal.org. To make it easier for divers to find an active dive store in their vicinity, we divided the United States into 9 Territories. The territories are NE, NC, NW, MA, SE, FL, SC, SW, SP. Each territory is broken down by state. Our association lists each dive store by their name, city, state, and website address. If a dive store has a website listed, it has been verified by us in the past year. Check it out to see if I am correct. If a dive store does not have a website address, it will be researched and verified or deleted within the next 12 months. Every year we verify all the dive stores in our directory, at a rate of one state per week, and we report it in our [Weekly News](#) press release service. Incidentally, the dive store press releases are usually the most read releases in the *Weekly News*. The dive store directories on each page are pretty good, but they are not perfect. Dive stores go out of business all the time and new ones enter the market without telling us. That's why we need manufacturers, sales reps, training agencies and their reps, and dive stores to pitch in and help us with our research. Our competitors read our weekly dive store reports all the time. You would think they could help us with our research!

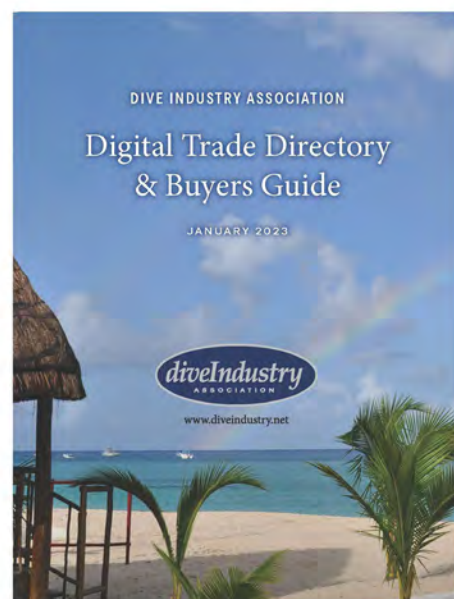
The current listing of dive stores on DIVE LOCAL's website has brought customers and more business to local dive stores, at no cost to them. It has also helped Dive Industry Professionals in other stakeholder groups to identify, and hopefully do business with dive stores that have been verified by us to be currently in business. When we are finished with the program on dive stores, we will be able to expand it to include other stakeholder groups in the supply and demand chains. We already have plans to initiate similar programs for the other 3 Pillars of the Local Diving Communities - [Dive Boats](#), [Dive Clubs](#), and Dive Instructors.

As a Trade Association we are documenting a Recreational Diving Industry World View as we see it. Our world view is based on the industry's collective research, education, and experience. It is not "the world, according to one person." It may have started out that way, but as more people get involved

with our research, the world view of the recreational diving industry becomes clearer for everyone. Our ultimate goal is to create a unified Global Diving Community and supply them with the programs, products, and services they require. To do that we need to know the companies that are in the business of creating and supplying these types of products. As a Marketing and Trade Association that is on mission to bring buyers and sellers together, that is what we specialize in. For a minimal annual membership fee, our supply side members can be referred or introduced to qualified buyers that we identify and maintain a business relationship with. Our magazine, [The Dive Industry Professional](#), features business articles about the diving industry every month. Our DIVE LOCAL Series covers how we support local diving businesses like dive stores, dive boats, dive clubs, and dive instructors. The focus of our local and regional advertising is to show local divers how they can learn to dive, buy their gear, go diving, and stay active in the recreational diving community. And that's only the demand side of our industry economic development plan. Wait until the diving industry learns what we have planned for the supply side of the industry.

This is an exciting time to become part of the Global Diving Business Network. For more information about global marketing opportunities, contact Gene Muchanski, Executive Director of the Dive Industry Association, 2294 Botanica Circle, West Melbourne, FL 32904. Phone: 321-914-3778. Email: gene@diveindustry.net Web: www.diveindustry.net

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SERIES ARTICLE



Dive Industry Network Series Create Your Own Support Network

By Gene Muchanski, Executive Director,
Dive Industry Association, Inc.

In February 2024 we introduced an article entitled *Create Your Own Circle of Influence*. In the article we explained how important this skill is to grow your business in the recreational diving industry. As you become more experienced and successful as a Dive Industry Professional, more people will look to you for advice and leadership in all aspects of the diving industry. To grow from that point on, you will need to expand your circle of influence to include vendors and suppliers who produce the programs, products, and services you have influence with. Creating your own network of vendors and suppliers will help you grow as a Dive Industry Business Professional and increase your level of influence in the Global Diving Community.

Creating a network of Dive Industry Professionals that you know and respect can increase the quality and quantity of advice and expertise you can share with divers across the globe. The secret ingredient is to

start networking with the people and vendors you do business with in your supply chain. This strategy is not restricted to diving influencers only. It applies to all Dive Industry Professionals and diving businesses from all stakeholder groups in the industry. Networking within your supply chain works because all the players in your supply chain have a vested interest in working together. Another advantage of working within a network is that your customers feel more comfortable doing business with a team of people that are catering to their needs, instead of just one single person or business.

An Example of Networking Partners A few years back I was planning a trip to Bonaire and decided to take my underwater video equipment which included a Light & Motion housing. Packed in my *Save A Dive Kit* were basic tools and extra O-rings for normal maintenance, but nothing beyond that. During our trip I had a problem with changing lens on the housing but was delighted to find out that Divi Flamingo Bonaire just happened to have two Light & Motion technical repair people on board. What seemed impossible for me to fix took these techs about 10 minutes to correct and I was good to go. They saved my dives and my vacation. It made me think about how important an integrated support system is to divers who are traveling far away from home. I looked back on some of the support networks I have been a part of in my diving career, and I realized that having a support network is something that is planned, executed, and maintained over time. It is not something that happens automatically and it takes a certain degree of commitment and strategic planning to create.

(Light & Motion Technicians at Divi Resort Bonaire)



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When Dive Industry Professionals first start diving away from home, they are faced with a number of dive planning scenarios. Their level of planning and preparedness will depend on whether they are traveling by themselves, with a buddy, or with a group. It will also depend on whether they are a casual traveling diver or if they are the person in charge of the group. A big factor in adventure travel planning is the distance away from home and the remoteness of the diving destination. A factor that many new divers fail to take into consideration is the amount of equipment supply support that is available at their destination. To the detriment of the Global Diving Community, many dive equipment manufacturers, dive resorts, dive operators, and dive travel specialists still have not addressed this issue.

Some dive planning scenarios call for self sufficiency with an expectancy that little to no supply support will be available on the trip. Other strategies call for working with destinations where equipment and maintenance services are more readily available. ***This article will focus on the benefits of building a supply support network for your company, your brand, your dealers, and their customers.***

As a Navy Diving Supervisor traveling around the South Pacific with U.S. Navy Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One, I learned how to pack our dive gear and fly-away boxes for any and all possible contingencies when traveling to isolated island locations. On a mission to Palau we loaded 12 sea-land containers filled with dive gear, gas compressors, a hyperbaric chamber, small boats, engines, tools, and spare parts. Even with all that gear we had to plan for contingencies and prepare for using emergency repair facilities that were closest to our operation, should we have the need. Having a support network is one thing. Knowing where it is and how to access it is another.

Over the past 57 years as an active diver and instructor, I have seen good and bad examples of companies who created, tried to create, or failed to create functioning supply support networks. In my opinion, two dive companies in particular (individuals actually) did an outstanding job in building an integrated supply support network. The participants in these networks were more like Team Players than independent diving professionals.

In the 1970's Fred Calhoun was the NAUI Branch

Manager in the Northeast Territory of the United States. Fred created a network of Instructors and dive businesses that included Instructors, Course Directors, Dive Stores, Dive Boat Operators, and even Dive Equipment Manufacturers who had a NAUI connection. I would venture to say that Fred Calhoun was the major diving influencer in New England at the time and was able to capture and maintain the dominant market share for the company he and his team represented. I credit Fred's success to the fact that he actively built, maintained, and controlled an integrated supply support network for the Local Dive Community and the industry he worked in.

A second supply support network that I admire most was the one created by Dick Bonin from Scubapro. Dick may have learned his networking strategies as a Navy Lieutenant and Team Member of the U.S. Navy's Underwater Demolition Team. When I was a Scubapro Dealer in the 1980's I experienced an integrated, unified approach to dealer supply support. It started with Scubapro's manufacturing, shipping, and repair facility in Compton. Everything under one roof. They had an organized and select Dealer Network. Their Sales Reps were in constant touch with their Regional



Dealer Networks. It was very common in the day to attend regional and national meetings with your Scubapro Team, whether it was at a regional dive show, national trade show, at the Scubapro factory, or on a local dive boat with the Scubapro Dive Team. Remember the steak sandwiches at the Scubapro Repair Seminar luncheons?

So, a lot has changed in the last 30 years. The branches are gone and so are the Branch Managers. With many companies, even the Regional Managers are a thing of the past. Dive equipment companies are

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entering the U.S. market and yet they don't have a warehouse or maintenance and warranty repair facility in the states. There are fewer Dealer Networks and certainly none that operate as a Team. When Retail Dealers are traveling the Caribbean, they are looking in vain to find dive resorts and dive operators with the same certification agency, the same equipment vendor, and any maintenance and repair support for the gear they are using. But don't worry. Creating your own network can help your business flourish.

Growing our businesses in a controlled manner should be our underlining strategy. I could speak volumes on the advantages of controlled growth, as opposed to uncontrolled growth. Business growth is only good if it is planned for and monitored during the growth phase. Profitable growth that builds the entire company is what we are looking for in the long run. Uncontrolled growth can lead to higher expenses, lower profits per sale, and missed opportunities and sales in other aspects of our company. Let's look at a few ways that we can grow our market share and profitability by using an integrated supply support network.

Using the NAUI example above, the recreational diving industry performs more efficiently when local diving communities are managed by regional managers. The branch system has worked in the past and there was a reason for that. Local businesses have local needs that only local support can provide. Local support is best provided by local managers. If the diving industry does not succeed on a local basis, it is a moot point to think about an integrated support network. There won't be any businesses to support. However, if your company succeeds in their local diving community, then they will need a supply support network when they travel outside of their local community.

In the example about Scubapro, I explained how successful Dick Bonin's strategy was in the United States. Well, how about developing that same strategy in the Caribbean? Around the world? In all fairness to Scubapro, dive travel was not a big thing in the 1980's. It is now. If I was still a Scubapro Dealer I would want to see Scubapro rental equipment at the dive resorts I took my groups to. I would want to see Scubapro Repair Technicians on staff with the dive operators and I would expect to see a good selection of repair parts and tools on hand. Should any of my group lose or break a piece of equipment, I would hope the dive

resort or the dive operator would have at least a small selection of Scubapro equipment for sale. In other words, I would want my dive resorts and my dive operators to be on the Scubapro Dealer Network with me.

Creating a supply support network is important to the traveling Dive Industry Professional because they want support for the programs, products, and services they use. However, it is only important for the equipment manufacturers, dive resorts, liveboards, dive operators and destination Instructors if they get bookings, referrals, and business from the traveling divers who want on-site support. Why would a dive business bring on Scubapro Repair Reps, Scubapro rental equipment, and Scubapro merchandise if you never get any Scubapro Dealer business or referrals? To be clear, a supply support network is a two-way process. It has to be beneficial to both parties.

Building your own network makes your job as a Dive Industry Professional easier. I know it is a difficult thing to do by yourself. I also realize that it is really the job of the Equipment Manufacturers and Training Agencies to build their Networks so that more Dive Industry Professionals "speak their language." But until your vendors build a supply support network for you, you can start by contacting the dive resorts and dive operators you do business with and ask them about their certification agency affiliations and about the dive equipment they rent, sell, and repair. You may be the reason your resort or dive operator finally adds an equipment line or another certification agency.

As a Marketing Professional I would start by asking the people you currently do business with, if they are capable of supporting the lines you carry. If they do, they are in your network and you have a home. If they don't currently support your lines, you can remind them that the issue is important to you and ask them to consider it. You can also contact your vendors and ask them to reach out to the resorts and dive operators on your behalf. You all have something to gain by working with each other.

For more information on future developing your own supply support network, contact Gene Muchanski, Executive Director, Dive Industry Association, Inc., 2294 Botanica Circle, West Melbourne, FL. Phone 321-914-3778. Email: gene@diveindustry.net web: www.diveindustry.net

DIVE LOCAL FLORIDA



and



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PRESENT....



CLEAR THE PATH

June 28-29, 2024

The Cove Restaurant & Tiki Bar | Deerfield Beach

\$100/ Team – 2 Divers

Grunts, Grits, and Dive Boat Divisions | Cash Prizes for Largest, Most & Smallest Kill
 “Rock the Dock” Cocktail Party Fri. & Sat., Calypso Music by Mango Man and Silent Auction

**Not diving, but want to Support the Cause? With a \$25 donation join the Friday night festivities.
 For anglers in the crowd, IGFA legend Capt. Bouncer Smith will be on hand to share his celebrated lifetime of
 Saltwater Fishing Tips, Techniques and Exploits!**

June 28, Friday. Kickoff & Dock Party

1730-1830 HRS Capt. Bouncer Smith Fishing Seminar
 1900-1930 HRS Dive Team Captains Meeting
 1730-2030 HRS Dock Party, Music by Mango Man.
 Docktails and Tall Tales Told by
 Diving Legend Neal “Dive God” Watson,
 Sportfishing Legend Copt. Bouncer Smith
 & Lobster Sniper Jim “Chiefy” Mathie

June 29, Saturday. Weigh In, Awards & Dock Party

0700 - 1500 HRS Open Water Warfare.
 1500 HRS Return to Base, Scale Opens
 1500 - 1900 HRS Dock Party, Music by Mango Man.
 1600 HRS Lionfish Cooking Demo & Tasting
 1800 HRS Scale Closes. Kill Counts Tabulated
 1830 HRS Awards & Veteran Salute
 1900 HRS Silent Auction Closes, Dismissed

All Net Proceeds Benefit Warfighters Scuba, providing
 free scuba certification to purple heart recipients.

www.warfighterscuba.org/



For More Event Info visit:
www.OperationLionfish.com

SERIES ARTICLE



Outstanding Divemaster Award Taylor Matevich – PADI Instructor Dressel Divers - Cozumel, Mexico

By Gene Muchanski, Editor
The Dive Industry Professional

Our magazine is dedicated to the active Dive Industry Professionals who work in the recreational diving industry and make it what it is today. When we go on a dive trip we are very mindful of the dive resorts we stay at and the dive operators we use. When we dive with a liveaboard vessel we do so knowing the liveaboard's reputation beforehand. Most of what the diving public knows about a destination, resort, liveaboard, or dive operator is from what they see in paid advertisements or from the destination's own website. Too often we see pretty pictures of the resort, the dive boats, and sometimes dazzling images of the destination's marine environment. Believe me, there is more to a dive trip than meets the eye. The one critical omission many dive destinations are guilty of, is not focusing more on their people. ***In my experience as a Dive Industry Marketing Professional, it's the Resort Staff and Dive Staff that will either make or break your diving vacation experience.*** We all

expect nice buildings and new boats, and even a great marine environment to dive in, but it is the quality of the staff service that makes us cherish our time spent at the resort and it is the thing that makes us want to return for another visit.

We planned a dive trip to Cozumel, Mexico earlier this year. We decided that May was the perfect time to dive Cozumel again. Our fins were getting a little dried out from lack of use, so we decided to get in a few dives at a place we were familiar with. You can never dive Cozumel too much. The tropical island is a short flight from anywhere in the United States and easy to get to. Divers have plenty of options when it comes to hotels, dive resorts, and condominiums. There are more dive operators on the island than you can shake a stick at. The island has many tourist attractions, great local restaurants, and night life for the young at heart.

We put in a call to [Roatan Charter](#), our Dive Travel Wholesaler, and asked Debbie Helms to book us at the Iberostar Cozumel. We have never stayed at Iberostar before and wanted to give it a try. My partner and I took a tour of the resort when we were

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in Cozumel 18 months ago and were impressed with what we saw. Iberostar is an all-inclusive resort and is located on the south-western tip of the island.

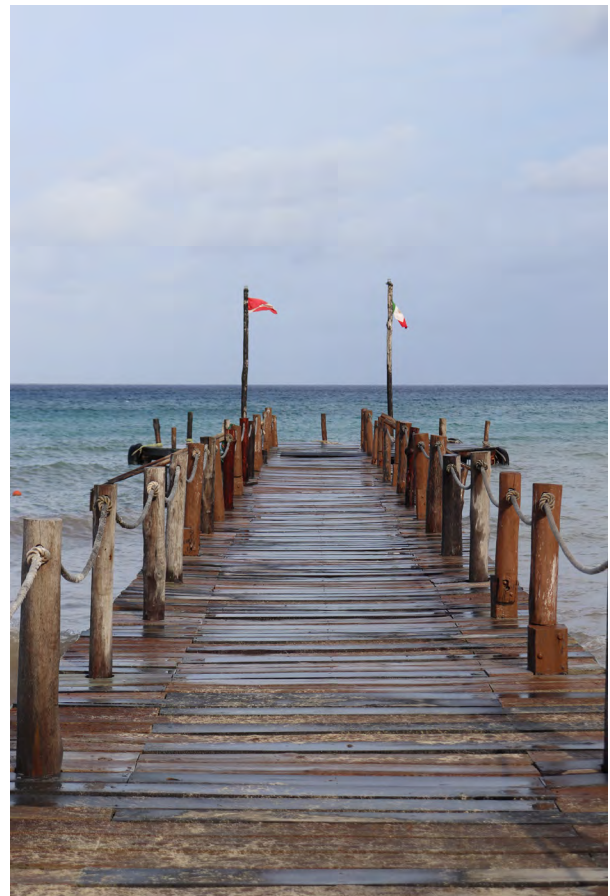
We arrived at Iberostar in the late afternoon, checked in, and were driven to our ocean front suite. After unpacking our luggage, we walked over to the dive center only to find out that they close at 5:00 p.m. It had been a rough day for the staff. The weather was bad, waves were crashing on the pier, and their afternoon dives had been cancelled. Most of the dive staff had already left for the day but a few were still in the process of locking things up at 5:30. That's when we arrived to check in. The Operations Manager, Eva, being the true professional that she is, gave us the necessary forms we needed to fill out and assigned us to a boat for the next morning. We came back the next morning to let Eva know that we would skip the morning dive and come back after breakfast to go through the check in process and locker assignments for diving on the following two days.

It may seem a little OCD to some people, but ***I have always felt that every dive is a unique experience and there is no such thing as a routine dive.*** Every dive we make can turn out to be a good experience or a bad one. It all depends on our attitude, our preparedness, the environmental conditions, and our performance. As planned, we came back after breakfast and checked-in with Nazareno Ovando, the Base Leader at Dressel Divers. Naza, completed all of our paperwork and assigned us a locker to stow all of our dive gear. We went through our pre-dive checks and put our gear away for the night. We were ready for the next day of diving.

It was sunny and bright the next morning. The weath-

er was a little choppy, but the boats were able to pick up divers and their equipment on the pier. We were assigned to a boat with 12 divers and two Divemasters. Dressel Divers uses certified Scuba Instructors as Divemasters on their boats. Our Group was fortunate to have Taylor Matevich as our Divemaster. Taylor is a Freelance Instructor, certified as a PADI Openwater Instructor in October 2020. I didn't know that about her until we looked her up on Linked-In when we got home. Judging by the way she performed her duties as a DiveMaster on the boat, I assumed that she had been diving all her life and teaching for many of them.

Getting divers and their gear loaded onto the boats in the morning is a well-choreographed event that is amazing to watch. The dive staff is responsible for getting up to one hundred divers and their equipment, loaded onto the dive boats while doing it safely but quickly. The process starts off with the support staff rolling out the diving cylinders to the end of the pier followed by a group of divers and equipment. Then the dive boats, one at a time, tie up to the end of pier, load the tanks, board the divers, and get underway.



I've been diving for a long time and I don't impress easily. That all changed with Taylor Matevich. Taylor took charge of our little dive group of six when they called out that our boat ready for boarding. She introduced herself to the group and led the way down the pier in preparation for boarding. Our tanks were already in place where Taylor wanted us to sit. She helped us get on board and showed us where to place our boat bags and where to sit. Now mind you, the dive boat is tied up to the end of the pier and it is rocking and rolling a little because of the waves. Twelve divers are getting onboard our boat while being assisted by two Divemasters. The Captain and Deckhand were busy controlling the boat. As soon as our boat pulled away from the pier, Taylor started supervising the nitrox prechecks, followed by gear assembly. It was at this point that we realized one of our regulator units did not get onboard. Taylor jumped in and offered a spare regulator to us and we got our gear assembled and checked.

As Taylor was getting her group weighted correctly, we had an opportunity to tell her that we had not been diving in 18 months and that I had gained a few pounds in that time and was unsure of my buoyancy. It was also the first time in many years that I was not planning on wearing a wetsuit. The water in Cozumel was 84 degrees. To add to Taylor's duties as our Divemaster, I sometimes have difficulty with snaps and hooks and inflator hoses because of my arthritis. When I asked her for help with my inflator hose she just calmly and patiently took care of the matter. I was watching Taylor perform her Divemaster duties and I could not help but realize how she performed one task at a time, quickly, patiently, and without getting excited or unraveled. I thought, wow, she's done this before, a lot.

Divemaster Taylor gave us a thorough briefing on the dive we were about to go on. She didn't have to read it off a slate or whiteboard. It came right from the heart. Before hitting the water, we knew where we were, what boat we were on, what emergency channel was being monitored, and what the dive profile looked like. She supervised us getting into the water and organized a group descent to start the dive. The dive went smoothly and without incident.

As expected, I was underweighted and a little buoyant. Taylor gave me a few extra pounds which helped a little. We enjoyed the dive the best we could.

Toward the end of the dive, the buoyancy got the best of me and it was time to wave to Taylor and let her know we were surfacing. Our dive was over, but at least it was not ruined. Thank you, Taylor.

I don't know if Taylor knew we were both old time scuba instructors with thousands of dives under our belt. We certainly didn't act like it. Even if she knew that, I am sure that it would not have made a difference in her assessment of our problems or in the way she assisted us. Taylor Matevich displayed superb performance in her duties as a Leading Divemaster in Cozumel and reflects great credit upon herself and the agency she affiliates with. My partner and I felt very comfortable with Taylor as our divemaster and we appreciated the professional care she showed us and the other members of our group. It is for these reasons that we honored Taylor Matevich with our Outstanding Divemaster Award. She shares that recognition with eight other Divemasters across the globe who we have received this award.

A Learning Experience: Our dive with Taylor was a learning experience and will most likely be the beginning of additional talking points concerning the duties and responsibilities of Divemasters as it relates to supervising an increasing number of ageing and fairly inactive divers. We are thankful for the training that Divemaster candidates receive leading up to their certification and we are thankful for the experience they get while working in their capacity as our diving guides. What we need to showcase and discuss in the future are the psychological factors that make some Divemasters more outstanding than others. We intend to elevate this discussion to include the changing role of Divemasters in an era of ageing divers and divers who are decreasing their diving frequency. It is important for future Divemasters to understand the difficulties encountered by ageing divers, regardless of their past experience and number of dives. I can vouch for that personally.

Ageing Diver Statistics: A subject matter that is becoming more important to our industry is the discussion about ageing divers. The baby boom generation once had the highest concentration of certified and active divers in the global diving community. Much of that demographic is changing. The average diver age population is increasing, and their level of diving activity is decreasing. We all know that as your diving frequency decreases so does your physical ability. The

same thing applies for diving equipment. Inactivity is the worst thing for diving equipment. As divers get older, our ability to dive like we used to at an earlier age declines. The need for an annual physical exam is advised for all divers and especially for ageing divers. Membership in DAN (Divers Alert Network) should be encouraged for all divers and the annual purchase of dive accident insurance, in my opinion, should be at the top of your to-do list every year. Divers over the age of 70 who have a DAN Membership and purchase dive accident insurance should contact [DAN Member Services](#) and obtain a DAN Membership and Dive Accident Insurance Age Restriction Exemption.



From our Sponsor: The Reed's Rod is a multi-purpose tool used for underwater photo work and preservation of the reef environment. Divers use the Reed's Rod to keep a safe distance away from a reef while exploring or photographing coral reef environments. The thick, stainless-steel rod is useful in helping to anchor a diver in the sand or to a reef in the advent of ocean currents, while preventing the diver from contacting the reef itself. Divemasters regularly tap the metal rod against their tanks to get the attention of divers in their group. The Reed's Rod Dive and Photo Tool comes in 14" and 18" models. It is available in a photo tool or non-photo tool model. The Photo Rod has a removable cap and threaded base for camera mounting. This helps maintain a specific focal length away from your reef subject. The Reed's Rod can be ordered from your local retail dive center or by visiting www.twotankedproductions.com



DIVE LOCAL



DIVE LOCAL – A Community Effort Building a Local Diving Community Message to the Local Divers

By Gene Muchanski, Executive Director,
Dive Industry Association, Inc.

Introduction to Section II

Our purpose for being in business as a Marketing and Trade Association is to **Build a Better Diving Industry, One Member at a Time**. Our Mission is to bring buyers & sellers together for mutual benefit, but to accomplish our mission we first had to lay a foundation for how the business of diving operates in our industry. The heartbeat of the Global Diving Community lies in the creation and maintenance of Local Diving Communities across the globe. The four pillars of each Local Diving Community that create and maintain the market we serve were discussed in articles published by *The Dive Industry Professional*.

The Four Pillars of The Local Diving Community:

- Dive Stores
- Dive Instructors
- Dive Boats
- Dive Clubs

Our Message to The Local Diving Community: Our second series of articles will be about the message we are creating to attract new divers and maintain the current population of certified divers. It is our intent to do more than just create more certified divers. Our mission is to show how scuba diving and diving related activities can become a lifetime recreation. Our message to the general public is: Learn to Dive – Buy Your Gear – Go Diving – Stay Active. Here is an introduction to the articles we will be sharing with the

industry over the next four months.

Our Message to The Local Diving Community:

- Learn to Dive
- Buy Your Gear
- Go Diving
- Stay Active

Learn to Dive: To safely enjoy the underwater world with scuba diving equipment it is necessary to take scuba diving lessons from a certified Scuba Diving Instructor. The lessons include classroom instruction, scuba training in confined water (usually a swimming pool), and scuba training dives in the open water environment (a river, lake, quarry, or ocean). We will discuss the certification agencies that exist in the global diving community and the instructors who affiliate with these agencies. Our article hopes to present all of the various options that are available to the non-diver in order to become scuba certified.

Besides educating the general public about the process of becoming certified, I believe it is important to explain why a person needs to become certified as a diver before they can purchase their gear and participate in the recreation. We think it is important to prepare potential scuba students as to what will be required of them to participate and what educational outcomes they will have gained by completing a scuba diving certification course. The Dive Industry Association is asking the Global Diving Business Network to assist us with information that will help us paint a clear picture of what potential scuba diving students can expect in a scuba course, and how to start the process of becoming certified.

Buy Your Gear: You can't go diving if you don't have gear. Of course you can buy it, rent it, or borrow it from a friend. There are advantages and disadvantages to each of these and we will discuss that. In the 57 years that I have been a certified diver, I have never known the diving industry to come to an agreement about what pieces of scuba diving equipment should be purchased as opposed to rented. Another issue that has been discussed, debated, and argued about is when a scuba diver should purchase their own gear. This article will cover as many of the options as it takes to help the newly enrolled or certified diver to make the purchasing decision that is best for them.

Go Diving: It is fair to say that most of the people

who take scuba diving lessons want to go diving. Once a person becomes a certified diver, the world of possibilities opens up to them like they could never have imagined. Our article will give the reader information about dive destinations worldwide. We will show them where to dive, how to arrange their diving experience, how to get there, and what to do when they are there. We will cover local diving, Caribbean diving, and exotic dive destinations. We will explain resort destinations, dive resorts, dive operators, and liveaboard options. I believe it is important to cover topics about individual dive trips, booking with a Dive Travel Wholesaler or a Dive Travel Specialist, and joining a group dive trip.

Stay Active: It only takes a single scuba instructor to certify a new diver, but it takes an entire Local Diving Community to keep a scuba diver active. **After all, scuba diving is a social recreation.** There are many ways to keep divers diving but it takes continual marketing efforts to help divers realize what their many options are. I believe that our industry as a whole, has been myopically focused on certifying new divers and then abandoning them once they get their c-card. Research tells us that divers who get certified and then stop diving have very little good to say about their training or about the recreation. Rarely will they recommend scuba diving to their friends if they, themselves have dropped out. The secret is to keep divers diving.

If you look at the four pillars of the local diving communities, you can see that each play a vital role in keeping divers active. When a diver affiliates with their local dive store, they have continuing education, equipment purchases and rentals, local boat dives, group dive trips, and equipment maintenance services available to them. Local diving instructors provide continuing education courses. Dive boat operators are the champions of local diving. Local diving is still the best way to keep divers active. Dive clubs conduct meetings, seminars, workshops, group travel, and social activities. We will cover all of those options in our article about staying active.

There are many other ways to stay active in diving and keep current with what is going on in the community. We plan to discuss the advantages of going to local consumer dive shows and national trade shows. We think that shows and events are the best way to charge you trade professional and certified diver

batteries. There are plenty of print magazines we will recommend that divers can subscribe to and of course, there are numerous digital magazines available online. Many divers stay active by frequenting social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Pinterest. We will explore social media as it applies to keeping divers active.

A great way to keep divers actively involved in the recreation is to show them how to develop hobbies or interests in subjects that could be performed in conjunction with diving. We will explore becoming knowledgeable in photography, wreck diving, metal detecting, environmental work, non-profit volunteering, and numerous other activities. Developing a hobby in a diving related activity is one sure way to remain active. Diving historians and collectors of diving equipment or magazines acquire a historical perspective of the diving industry that can be shared with divers around the world through seminars, workshops, and published articles. We will try to include all of those options as we explore ways to keep divers active.

By writing about our message to the local diving community we are doing something more than trying to grow and maintain the global diving community. We are referring customers to the four pillars of the Local Diving Communities. And who benefits from that besides the local dive stores, dive boats, dive clubs, and Instructors? All of the producers of diving equipment, training, travel, and lifestyle products benefit. We could not do our job of referring the programs, products, and services to divers who are needing them unless we maintained a current database base of all the producers and sellers of these products. Because of our continual research in the diving industry and the business relationships we have developed in the Global Diving Business Network, we are able to refer customers to the products and companies they need.

We will promote diving and diving related programs, products, and services and the dive businesses that produce and sell them, through our *Weekly News* press release service and our monthly trade magazine *The Dive Industry Professional*. Our major referral source for active dive consumers is our *Annual Trade Directory* that is updated monthly. Although our database of over 8,000 dive industry businesses is quite extensive and up-to-date, our ability to refer products and dive businesses is limited by our knowledge and

DIVE LOCAL

experience with a select number of vendors. Current members of the Dive Industry Association have a competitive advantage in our referral process because we can provide and promote current contact information and active hot links to their websites, stores, and ordering centers. A big part of our series on our marketing message to consumers is going to be how they can reach the businesses that provide the programs, products, and services they need, want, and can afford.

We are inviting all 8,000 + dive businesses and Dive Industry Professionals to join our Global Diving Business Network to acquire new divers, retain customers, and serve the market that has been built over the years. Your annual commitment to this cooperative marketing effort is only \$125 per year, through your membership in the Dive Industry Association. Our growth plans for the industry has plans for expansion as we approach 1,00 members and again at 2,000 members. We are looking forward to working with you today.

For more information on becoming a Member in our Global Diving Business Network, contact Gene Muchanski, Executive Director, Dive Industry Association, Inc., 2294 Botanica Circle, West Melbourne, FL. Phone 321-914-3778. Email: gene@diveindustry.net web: www.diveindustry.net



ADVERTISEMENT



SHOWS & EVENTS

2024 TRADE SHOWS



June 1-2, 2024: Scuba Show. 37th Annual Consumer Scuba Show. Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles, CA. Contact Mark Young, Executive Director. Phone: 816-665-8679. email: mail@scubashow.com Web: www.scubashow.com



November 19-22, 2024: Dema Show. 48th Annual Industry Trade Show. Las Vegas Convention Center, South Halls, Las Vegas, NV. Phone: 800-687-7469, email: Web: www.demashow.com



June 28-29, 2024: Operation Lionfish – Clear The Path. Lionfish Derby, Contest, and Dock Party. All Net Proceeds Benefit Warfighters Scuba. Deerfield Beach, FL. Contact Mark Ellert, President Guy Harvey Outpost. Phone: 954-368-4845. email: mhellert@guyharveyoutpost.com Web: www.OperationLionfish.com



2025 TRADE SHOWS



September 5-7, 2024: Surf Expo. 47th Annual Industry Trade Show. Orange County Convention Center – South Concourse, 9800 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819. Contact Rod Tomlinson. Toll Free Phone: 800-947-7873. email: rod.tomlinson@surfexpo.com Direct: 678-781-7914. Web: www.surfexpo.com

January 8-10, 2025: Surf Expo. 48th Annual Industry Trade Show. Orange County Convention Center – West Concourse, 9899 International Drive, Orlando, FL. Contact Rod Tomlinson. Toll Free Phone: 800-947-7873. Phone: 678-781-7900. email: rod.tomlinson@surfexpo.com Direct: 678-781-7914. Web: www.surfexpo.com



September 7-8, 2024: ScubaCon – In-Person Scuba Event. 41st Anniversary Scuba Event. Boulder, CO. Contact Steve Weaver, Dream Weaver Travel. Phone: 303-499-0942. email: steve@diveDWT.com Web: www.DreamWeaverTravel.com

January 18-26, 2025: Boot Dusseldorf – 54th International Boat Show. Dusseldorf, Germany. Diving Pavilion in Hall 3. Contact: Justin Kesselring, Project Manager, Messe Dusseldorf North America, 150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2920, Chicago, IL 60601. Phone: 312-781-5180 email: info@mdna.com Web: <http://www.mdna.com/trade-shows/details/boot>

SHOWS & EVENTS



March 15-16, 2025: *The Boston Sea Rovers 71st Annual International Underwater Clinic.* CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort, Danvers, MA Contact David Caldwell, Exhibit Co-Chairman, Email: djc.searover@gmail.com or visit www.bostonsearovers.com



March 28-30, 2025: *Beneath the Sea* - 46th Annual International Oceans Exposition. New Jersey Meadowlands Expo Center, Secaucus, NJ. Contact Maria Hults. Phone: 914-664-4310. Fax: 914-664-4315. email: info@beneaththesea.org Web: www.beneaththesea.us



November 11-14, 2025: *Dema Show.* 49th Annual Industry Trade Show. Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL. Phone: 800-687-7469, email: Web: www.demashow.com

2024 PHOTOGRAPHY EVENTS



August 24 – September 8, 2024: *MantaFest Photography School & Contest.* 18th Annual Event. Yap, Micronesia. Contact Bill Acker. Web: www.mantaray.com



BlackwaterFest
Yap - Micronesia

September 7-15, 2024: *BlackwaterFest 2024 Photography School.* 2nd Annual Event. Yap, Micronesia. Contact Bill Acker. Web: www.mantaray.com



MEMBERSHIP



The Dive Industry Association is a Marketing and Trade Association dedicated to *“Building a Better Industry, One Member at a Time.”* Founded in April 2001, Dive Businesses and Individuals have joined our association to promote their business and grow the diving industry.

“Building a Better Industry, One Member at a Time”

Our Purpose is to build a cohesive and functional Global Diving Business Network.

Our Vision is to *Build a Better Industry, One Member at a Time.*

Our Mission is to Bring Buyers & Sellers together to facilitate business success and industry growth.

Our Focus is to concentrate on the industry’s sale of diving equipment, training, travel, and lifestyle products.

Our Goals are to:

- Unite the Industry to a common purpose
- Promote Professional Business Development within our Membership
- Generate maximum marketing exposure and sales leads for our Members
- Increase business opportunities for our Members

Reasons to Join: Annual dues are \$125. Annual renewals, if paid by your annual renewal date are \$100. There is no place in the industry where you get as much coverage for so little an investment. The association promotes your business using blogs, websites, directories, social media, at trade and consumer shows and through direct referrals. Our networking capability is the envy of the International Diving community. The discounts you receive from Constant Contact by being a member and the FREE weekly press releases you receive more than pay for your dues many times over. Don’t be a *Lone Marketeer*. Join the Dive Industry Association this year.

For more information: Contact Gene Muchanski, Executive Director, Dive Industry Association, Inc., 2294 Botanica Circle, West Melbourne, Florida, 32904. Phone: 321-914-3778. eMail: gene@diveindustry.net Web: www.diveindustry.net



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS



"Building a Better Industry, One Member at a Time"

We would like to thank the following New Members for joining our Global Diving Business Network.

We would like to thank the following Charter Members and Members for renewing with us for another year.

NEW MEMBERS

0434 – MGW Productions – Service Provider, Film Maker – www.mgwpro.com

RENEWING MEMBERS

0071 – Our World-Underwater Scholarship Society – Non-Profit – www.owuscholarship.org

0346 – Beqa Lagoon Resort – Travel, Dive Resort – www.BeqaLagoonResort.com

0351 – Dream Weaver Travel – Travel, Wholesaler – www.DreamWeaverTravel.com

0353 – NAUI Worldwide – Training Agency – www.naui.org

0356 – Saint Lucia Tourism Authority – Travel, Tourism Board – www.stlucia.org

0374 – XINSURANCE – Service Provider, Insurance – www.xinsurance.com

0393 – Bilikiki Cruises Limited – Travel, Liveaboard – www.bilikiki.com

0423 – Villa on Dunbar Rock – Travel, Dive Resort – www.dunbarrock.com

0424 – Cabanas on Clark's Cay – Travel, Dive Resort – www.clarkscay.com

0429 – The LZK Group (ZooKeeper) – Manufacturer – www.LionfishZK.com

0432 – ITDA International Technical Diving Agency – Training Agency – www.diveitda.com





"Building a Better Industry, One Member at a Time"

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Company Name: _____

[] Proprietorship [] Partnership [] Corporation [] LLC Years in Business: _____

Contact Person: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Contact Person's Position: _____ Years with Company: _____

Business Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Business Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Toll Free Phone: _____ Toll Free Fax: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Facebook: _____ Skype: _____

E-mail Address for directories: _____

E-mail address for DIA correspondence: _____

Web Site (URL): _____

Trade Directory by-line (1-2 lines only): _____

DEMA Member? [] No [] Yes Number: _____ Votes: _____ Voting Delegate: _____

Category – Business - (Choose One) \$25 Registration Fee + \$100 Annual Membership Dues

- [] Manufacturer [] Distributor [] Retail Center [] Charter Boat [] Dive Club
[] Service Provider [] Industry Media [] Trade Association [] Training Association
[] Service Organization [] Trade Show Organizer [] Training Facility [] Travel Business

Category – Individual - (Choose One) \$25 Registration Fee + \$50 Annual Membership Dues

- [] Sales Representative [] Professional Educator [] Industry Professional

Payment Method: [] Cash / [] Check / [] Credit Card / [] PayPal / [] Square

[] Check (payable to Dive Industry Association, Inc.) \$ _____ Check # _____

[] If paying by Credit Card, please fill out: Type: [] American Express [] MasterCard [] Visa

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ CVV: _____

Card Holder's Name: _____ Signature: _____

[] Referred by: _____

* DIA retains the right to re-classify members according to our membership standards.

Mail to: Dive Industry Association, Inc., 2294 Botanica Circle, West Melbourne, FL 32904-7339



ARE WE THERE YET?

SCUBA DIVING EXCURSIONS LIVEBOARDS GROUP TRAVEL

1 (800) 282-8932 | Info@RoatanCharter.com | www.RoatanCharter.com



DIVE INDUSTRY
FOUNDATION

PROMOTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN WATERSPORTS

Dive Industry Foundation
501(c)(3) Non-Profit, Tax Exempt
Charitable, Educational Organization
www.diveindustry.org