THE DIVE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

October 1, 2026 - Vol 26, Issue 10



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Welcome to the October 2026 edition of *The Dive Industry Professional*. ***This year, we celebrated our 25th Anniversary.*** As a Trade Publication, *The Dive Industry Professional* is dedicated to the professional advancement of Dive Industry Professionals worldwide. Our mission is to bring buyers & sellers together through our use of 21st Century marketing tools.

We begin this issue with our editorial, ***October is for Pre-Show Marketing.*** The four days of the industry's annual trade event is only the tip of the iceberg from a marketing point of view. There is so much more that goes into the planning and following up parts of a marketing campaign. This article talks about the three components of a trade event; the pre-show, at-show, and post-show portions. The month before any show and event is dedicated to informing your potential audience that your company will be at the event and offering something of value to your potential customers. It's all about building your audience before the event rather than just showing up and hoping that people stop by your booth.

Our Recreation Fitness Series begins with ***ScubaFit and Aqua Body Strong Offer Dive Centers a New Way to Build Revenue, Fitness, and Community Through Pool-Based Programming.*** Physical fitness for diving is so important, and yet it is so neglected. Gretch M. Ashton is an expert in scuba diving fitness. She offers our industry a practical solution for making ourselves physically ready to engage in diving and watersports activities.

Our ***Shows & Events*** have details about trade and consumer shows & events for 2026 & 2027. Our ***Membership*** pages invite you to join the Dive Industry Association and find out why so many dive businesses become Members and renew in our Global Diving Business Network.

Gene Muchanski
Editor, *The Dive Industry Professional*

Dive Industry Association, Inc. is the Premier Trade Association in the Global Diving Industry, with Members Worldwide.

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diveIndustry ASSOCIATION Monthly Newsletter

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Dive Industry Association, Inc.
2294 Botanica Circle
West Melbourne, FL 32904
Phone: 321-914-3778
eMail: gene@diveindustry.net
Web: www.diveindustry.net

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EDITORIAL



October is for Pre-Show Marketing

by Gene Muchanski, Editor
The Dive Industry Professional

There is a time and place for everything. Especially in the Global Diving Business Network. Our job as Industry Planners is to follow the ebb and flow of business activity in the global diving community and identify business and educational opportunities that exist for buyers and sellers of diving equipment, services, training, travel, and lifestyle products.

As Dive Industry Professionals we want to take advantage of events scheduled in the diving industry's seasonality curve for maximum exposure and benefit. There are shows & events that are scheduled throughout the year on a local, regional, national, and international basis. Some are focused on the trade, some on the end user, and some on both. To help us understand how a diving show or event can benefit Dive Industry Professionals, we need to know their specific classification and purpose. In the global diving community, we have Trade Shows, Consumer Dive Shows, Professional Development Conferences, and Social Gatherings.

The global diving industry will have its 50th opportunity to get together in one place at one time, this November. Since 1982 I have attended and exhibited at the DEMA Show over 40 times and I can tell you that it is the biggest diving industry event that is available to Dive Industry Professionals. The annual event is promoted as a Trade Only event, but I honestly believe that definition highly underestimates its true potential. The annual event is much more than that.

The industry's annual trade event may be only four days in length. Add a day or two for set-up and breakdown, and maybe a few days at either end of the event for exhibitor sponsored meetings and training. That short period of time is what we call the at-show portion. Much like the tip of an iceberg to our marketing professionals.

There are three components to a trade or consumer dive show. All three components are equally important to the overall marketing campaign success, and each is reliant on the others to achieve your planned outcomes and objectives. The three parts of an event are the pre-show, at-show, and post-show components. The critical errors that many sales and marketing people make are that they don't invest the necessary time in the getting ready for an event and according to Rhonda Abrams of The Planning Shop, 80% of exhibitors don't follow-up on leads they meet at an event. I would assume that 80% of the attendees don't follow up on contacts they meet at the show or follow-through with what they learned at the show seminars. ***Our opinion is that Exhibitors, Speakers, and Attendees cannot just show up at a meeting or event and hope for the best.*** Shows & Events are too important for our professional development to casually take for granted. Dive Industry Professionals need to take full advantage of the opportunities provided to them by the producers of shows & events, to maximize their return on investment of time, money, and manpower.

Trade Shows: A Trade Show, or Expo, is a marketplace set up to bring buyers and sellers together to do business. The marketplace is set up by the show producers to facilitate a planned objective for the participants. The show producers arrange

the venue (a place where something happens) that usually includes a convention center, hotels, restaurants, freight and handling, and display contracting. Exhibitors should work closely with the show producers to keep them updated as to how they are going to utilize their exhibit hall space.

In the diving industry, there are two basic formats for exhibit hall utilization. The concepts focus on order writing or what I call "show & tell" displays. Trade shows of the past focused on order writing because of the high percentage of qualified retail buyers. Each booth featured the vendor's new products and included sales order writing tables. The company Sales Reps made appointments with their local Dealers as part of their pre-show marketing and scheduled a time at the show for product briefings and order writing.

Dive Industry Professionals without purchasing authority spend time on the exhibit floor to see new products and talk with the vendor's marketing staff. A show & tell booth display is set up to accommodate this type of presentation.

Regardless of the type of display you have, the key to increasing your booth traffic at the show is to explain your exhibiting format to your dealers and attendees prior to the show. First of all, you will want to know who is attending the show. Second, you will want to make appointments for your current Dealers and any potential Dealers you are prospecting. Making sales appointments for the show time is extremely important because of the amount of activity during the show and for the limited amount of time each Dealer has to spend with each vendor. Every Regional Sales Rep's dance card should be filled prior to the fist day of the show.

Professional Development Seminars: Seminars are important. They are a major part of trade and consumer dive shows. A seminar room usually has about 40 seats on average. If each seminar is an hour long, that is 40 man-hours of education for the seminar advocates. Of course, vendors in the exhibit hall will see that as 40 man-hours off the sales floor. That is where pre-show planning comes in handy. Successful seminar presenters do their best to fill their seminars prior to the show. It helps seminar attendees plan their trade show agenda.

Seminars are popular because the presenters have a captive audience for 45 minutes and can include education, sales, and social aspects into one time slot for multiple people. They are also useful for expanding the educational side of diving equipment while reducing the time an attendee has to spend at a show & tell display in the exhibit hall.

Social Aspects of a Show: Pre-Show marketing is especially important for the social aspects during a trade show. Socials can be run by show producers or exhibiting vendors. Socials are run before show time, as with breakfast meetings, and some are run during the show. Most are run after the show closes for the day. To keep attendance capacity within limits and be able to properly serve all who attend, pre-show invitations and RSVPs should be considered.

Pre-Show planning for social events is necessary because there are so many options for attendees to take advantage of. Depending on the venue, conflicting social events could be vendor hospitality suites, and private dinners with major vendors and suppliers. Either way, it's a good idea to spend the entire month of October preparing and planning your at-show activities.

Become a Member of our Global Diving Business Network: Annual Membership in the Dive Industry Association is $125 and includes placement in our Trade Directories and websites. Our organization uses websites and directories in advertising and marketing campaigns to refer business to our members. By joining our network, you are becoming part of a network that works on your behalf to bring buyers and sellers together for the benefit and growth of the Global Diving Community. Download a Membership Application today.

# # #

RECREATION FITNESS



ScubaFit® and Aqua Body Strong® Offer Dive Centers a New Way to Build Revenue, Fitness, and Community Through Pool-Based Programming

Gretchen M. Ashton, owner of ScubaFit®, the PADI® ScubaFit® Diver Distinctive Specialty, and leader in scuba diving fitness for more than 25 years, introduces Aqua Body Strong® by Gia Lucy.

Gretchen is now an instructor for Aqua Board and Aqua Combat classes developed by Gia and encourages dive professionals to consider how structured aquatic fitness can help strengthen both their clients and their business model. "The pool is one of the most valuable assets a dive center has," said Ashton. "Aqua Body Strong® gives operators a practical and exciting way to use that space for fitness, confidence-building, and community engagement."

Dive centers, scuba schools, resorts, and aquatic facilities seeking new ways to maximize pool use now have an opportunity to expand programming with Aqua Body Strong®, a water-fitness system designed to deliver engaging, low-impact, high-energy classes for a wide range of participants.

Founded by Gia Lucy in 2017, Aqua Body Strong® combines specialized aquatic equipment, instructor certification, and purposeful class formats that help facilities transform pools into active programming spaces. Equipment options include aqua boards, aqua bicycles, aqua treadmills, aqua trampolines, and Aqua Combat bags and gloves, allowing operators to offer fresh class experiences that support strength, balance, endurance, coordination, and water confidence.

For the diving industry, the program presents a natural fit. Pool-based fitness can support diver conditioning, build comfort in the water, create cross-training opportunities, and give facilities a reason to bring students, certified divers, and local community members back to the pool between traditional scuba courses and travel programs.

Facilities interested in launching Aqua Body Strong® programming can learn more about instructor certification, equipment selection, and implementation options by contacting Gretchen M. Ashton at ScubaFit® or Gia Lucy at Aqua Body Strong®. The program is suited for dive centers, resorts, aquatic clubs, fitness facilities, and wellness destinations looking to increase pool utilization, diversify class offerings, and create new revenue opportunities.

Contact:
Gretchen M. Ashton, Owner, ScubaFit®
Website: www.ScubaFit.com

Gia Lucy, Founder and CEO, Aqua Body Strong®
Website: www.AquaBodyStrong.com

ScubaFit®
Defining Physical Fitness for Diving

Gretchen M. Ashton, CFT, SFT, SFN, SSC, NBFE
Owner, ScubaFit®, FitDiver®, DiveFit®, SurfWalking

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SCAN ME

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Surf Expo is a trade only event, open to qualified retail buyers.

GOLDEN ROCK RESORT

Nature · Dive · Beach

Golden Rock Resort receives MICHELIN Key for second Consecutive year



St. Eustatius, Dutch Caribbean — Golden Rock Resort has once again been awarded One MICHELIN Key by the prestigious MICHELIN Guide, marking the second consecutive year the resort has received this distinguished international recognition. Golden Rock Resort remains the only hotel across the BES islands — Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba — to hold a MICHELIN Key.

The MICHELIN Key recognizes the world's most exceptional hotels and is the hospitality counterpart to the renowned MICHELIN Stars awarded to restaurants. One MICHELIN Key signifies "a very special stay" and celebrates hotels that stand out for their character, quality of hospitality and ability to create a truly memorable guest experience.

MICHELIN GUIDE 2026

A mark of exceptional hospitality

The MICHELIN Key recognizes the world's most exceptional hotels and is the hospitality counterpart to the renowned MICHELIN Stars awarded to restaurants. One MICHELIN Key signifies "a very special stay" and celebrates hotels that stand out for their character, quality of hospitality and ability to create a truly memorable guest experience.

Receiving the distinction for a second consecutive year underlines Golden Rock Resort's consistent commitment to delivering an exceptional standard of hospitality on St. Eustatius, one of the Caribbean's most authentic and unspoiled destinations.

Where luxury meets the nature of St. Eustatius


SPIRIT
LIVEABOARDS
THE NEWEST
DIVE EXPERIENCE
IN THE MALDIVES
DIVE INTO THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME
• Secluded dive locations for crowd-free experience itineraries available
• Brand new vessel
• Modern design with spacious cabins
• Panoramic lounges
• Onboard chef and gourmet dining
• Culture and educational experiences
• Nitrox included
• Starlink available
• Local island visits on some itineraries
7 nights from $2695*
WOW!!
GROUP SPECIAL
6 FREE with 20 Paid:
YOUR OWN BOAT!
Also 2 Free with 10pd
+17023593519
reservations@spiritliveaboards.com
www.spiritliveaboards.com
*Pricing is per person USD$ based on double occupancy. Package is valid for travel beginning Feb 22, 2025 through Feb 2027. Non-divers will receive a $100 usd voucher to spend on board. May not be combined with any other specials. Pricing is subject to change and other restrictions may apply. ++ internet at an additional cost.

SHOWS & EVENTS

2026 TRADE SHOWS

September 16-18, 2026: ***Surf Expo***. 50th 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

November 3-6, 2026: ***Dema Show***. 50th Annual Industry Trade Show. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, LA. Phone: 800-687-7469. Web: www.demashow.com

January 23-31, 2027: ***Boot Dusseldorf*** – 57th 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

March 13-14, 2027: ***The Boston Sea Rovers 73rd Annual International Ocean Clinic***. CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort, Danvers, MA Contact David Caldwell, Exhibit Co-Chairman, Email: djc.searover@gmail.com or visit www.bostonsearovers.com

2027 TRADE SHOWS

January 6-8, 2027: ***Surf Expo***. 51st 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

April 2-4, 2027: *Beneath the Sea* - 47th 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.us Web: www.beneaththesea.us

SHOWS & EVENTS

April 24-25, 2027: ***Scuba Show Atlantic City***. 2nd Annual Consumer Scuba Show. Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, NJ. Contact Ross Arnold, Publishing Director. Phone: 816-665-8679. email: events@rorkmedia.com Web: www.scubashow.com



May 15-16, 2027: ***Scuba Show Anaheim***. 40th Annual Consumer Scuba Show. Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA. Contact Ross Arnold, Publishing Director. Phone: 816-665-8679. Email: events@rorkmedia.com Web: www.scubashow.com



September 4-6, 2027: ***Surf Expo***. 51st 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



November 2-5, 2027: ***Dema Show***. 51st Annual Industry Trade Show. Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL. West Concourse. Phone: 800-687-7469. Web: www.demashow.com



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MEMBERSHIP

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

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.

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



"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

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

diveIndustry ASSOCIATION

"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

0456 – Sea Ventures Pro Dive Centers – Travel, Dive Operator – www.DivePuertoRico.com

RENEWING MEMBERS

0013 – RipTide Sales Group – Sales Rep Company – www.RipTideScuba.net

0047 – Henderson Aquatics – Manufacturer, Wetsuits – www.HendersonUSA.com

0222 – Cane Bay Dive Shop Inc – Travel, Dive Operator – www.canebayscuba.com

0307 – Mexico Liveaboards – Travel, Liveaboards – www.MexicoLiveaboards.com

0350 – All West Apartments & Go West Diving – Resort & Dive Operator – www.gowestdiving.com

0362 – Mayan Princess Beach Resort – Travel, Dive Resort – www.mayanprincess.com

0368 – Captain Don's Habitat – Travel, Dive Resort & Dive Operator – www.HabitatBonaire.com

0414 – Mermaid Liveaboards – Travel, Liveaboards – www.mermaid-liveaboards.com

0428 – Heroes del Mar – Non-Profit – www.heroesdelmar.org

0433 – Manta Ray Bay Resort & Yap Divers – Travel, Dive Resort – www.mantaray.com

0435 – Koro Sun Resort and Rainforest Spa – Travel, Dive Resort – www.korosunresort.com

0438 – ScubaFit LLC – Service Provider, Health Training – www.ScubaFit.com

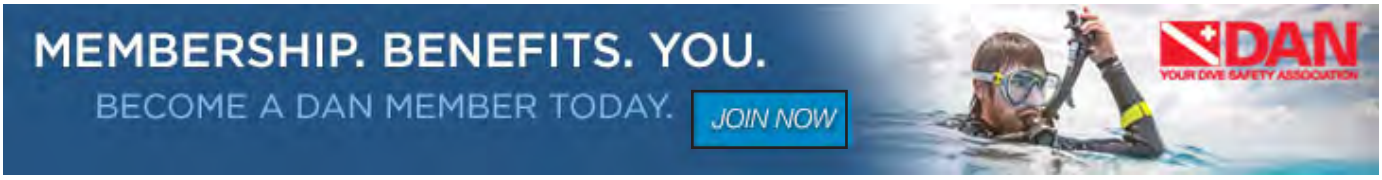
0439 – Rock Media – Media & Event Organizer – www.rorkmedia.com

0442 – Scuba Diving Industry Magazine – Media – www.scubadivingindustry.com

0444 – EncomPos Software – Service Provider, Retail POS – www.diversepos.com

0445 – Bananarama Dive & Beach Resort – Travel, Resort & Dive Operator – www.bananarama.com

0446 – Dive 1st Aid – Manufacturer – www.dive1staid.com




ROATÁN
CHARTER
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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