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Fuel1 Direct Aims to Benefit Marinas with Additional Revenue and Enhanced Customer Service

By Ron Ballanti

Sustainable marine fuels have been an ongoing focus for the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), motor manufacturers and other industry stakeholders as a realistic way to reduce the environmental footprint of recreational boating across the United States.

New fuels like PurFuels 93 Octane are better for the environment, better for boats (thanks to higher octane and zero ethanol) and can be utilized with any gasoline powered engine, old or new, inboard or outboard. With so much going for it and an entire industry eager to showcase boating as a “green”

outdoor activity, it is surprising that this fuel isn’t everywhere.

Fuel Storage Stations

It could be, if not for the incredibly complex machinations of America’s fuel industry. In a system designed for transporting, delivering and selling millions of gallons of fuel a day, it’s hard to gain traction for bringing relatively small quantities of specialized marine gas to marinas, one at a time, not to mention the layers of government red tape that must be contended with on national, state and local levels.

Fuel 1 Direct is looking to break down these barriers by providing marinas, boat/motor dealers and other industry stakeholders with portable, self-contained fuel storage and dispensing stations. Fuel 1, a St. Petersburg, Florida-based national retailer of fuel delivery and portable fueling systems, has formed a partnership to provide its fuel MicroStations to Suzuki Marine dealers. With support from Florida-based Suzuki Marine, an original and active industry proponent of sustainable fuels, dealers have begun offering sustainable fuel to customers.

Not surprisingly, Fuel 1 is also working to set up similar partnerships at marinas. This is a logical way to give boaters access to sustainable fuel while simultaneously providing a valuable customer service.

“Many marinas face a common challenge. They want to offer premium fuel to their customers but lack the infrastructure, permitting flexibility or capital required for traditional underground fuel systems,” said Fuel 1 Director Bill Marr. “We are addressing this challenge through our innovative MicroStation platform.”

Fuel 1 is currently working with Grove Point Marinas to evaluate opportunities at several locations, including Holly Bluff Marina and Deland Marina in Florida. The company is also exploring additional partnerships at Fish House Marina, Matlacha Marina and Jug Creek Marina on Pine Island. Several other marina locations are currently under review across Florida. While the company is working first to partner with Florida-based marinas, plans call for



Fuel 1 Direct offers portable, self-contained fuel storage and dispensing stations.

further expansion into key Northeast boating markets like New Hampshire, Massachusetts and New Jersey, as well as both North and South Carolina.

A Cleaner Fuel

PurFuels 93 non-ethanol fuel is recommended for marine engines and is specially designed for boaters, powersports enthusiasts and owners of performance engines. It has the backing of the boating industry and is approved for use across the United States. This fuel provides long-term storage stability, eliminates concerns associated with ethanol and helps protect fuel systems from corrosion, moisture contamination and phase separation. In addition to its higher octane, this fuel burns cooler and cleaner for optimum engine efficiency. PurFuels 93 significantly reduces engine emissions, as well as evaporative emissions for cleaner fuel handling.

Fuel 1's MicroStation system allows marinas to offer premium, ethanol-free gasoline without the need for costly underground storage tanks or major site redevelopment. Its modular system can be deployed quickly, relocated if necessary, and is scalable to meet demand. Most importantly, it maintains compliance with applicable fuel storage and dispensing standards.

Fuel 1's partnership plan sets marinas up to offer this beneficial fuel without need for property disruption or capital investment. Instead, both parties share in the revenue generated through fuel sales. Fuel 1 manages all compliance, liability, inventory, refueling and point of sale systems.

While generating additional revenue is a strong selling point for marinas, it's only the tip of the iceberg. "For marina operators, the benefits extend beyond fuel sales," said Fuel 1 CEO Joe BenHooren. "Our business model creates a new revenue stream, attracts boaters seeking premium fuel and increases traffic to marina stores, service departments and waterfront businesses. In many cases, marinas that could never justify the cost of installing a traditional fueling facility can now offer fuel services with a turnkey solution."

This service is also providing an important convenience to marina



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customers, making it easier to fuel up in their "home port." In many areas of the country, boaters who keep their boats slipped in marinas must motor elsewhere to top off before or after a day on the water, cutting into valuable time that could be spent with friends and family.

"Our goal is simple," BenHooren said. "We want to provide marinas with a safe, regulations-compliant and profitable fuel solution where traditional fueling infrastructure may not be practical or economically feasible." ⚓



The fuel stations can be scalable to meet demand and can be easily relocated.