



“Recession Proofing Your Marina”

Scott Grindy, CMM, CPE

PCC & APP Partnership

- October 2024 a Reciprocal Agreement between Pacific Coast Congress of Harbor Masters and Port Managers and Association of Pacific Ports.
- The two organizations share common regional coverage and overlap of member ports and marinas and recognized both would benefit from greater communication and collaboration. PCC and APP promote education, training, and professionalism among marina and port personnel along the West Coast.
- The agreement was signed by Scott Grindy, President of PCC, and Ian Marr, Chairman of APP.
- PCC founded in 1974, and APP Founded in 1913.
- [That's 165 Years of Maritime Wisdom!](#)



Agenda

- **The Recession of 2008-09 History**
- **Keeping Your Boating Customer**
- **Staff Inservice as a Team to Help**
- **Marketing and Promotion, Get Ahead of the potential Vacancy Issues.**
- **Study your Regional Rates, Occupancies**
- **Try NOT to lower rates, but offer Special Deals**
- **Final tips & takeaways**



The Great Recession

[thə 'grāt ri-'se-shən]

The economic downturn from 2007 to 2009 resulting from the bursting of the U.S. housing bubble and the global financial crisis.

The Recession of 2007–09

- Ø Marinas of Puget Sound started dropping rates, competing for customers as boating customers left for cheaper berthing.
- Ø Staffing reductions, budget cuts and constant adjustments.
- Ø Cooperation between agency marinas did not exist at first, delays of working together was costly.
- Ø Don't Race to the Bottom!
- Ø Be Creative for adding ways for your boater to stay at your marina.



- **Show You Care to Your Customers**

Invite to simple events such as hot dog chat sessions, how to fix your boat saving \$\$, be a friend to your boaters, not just a landlord.



Keeping Your Boating Customer

- ü Use in house maintenance staff vs contracted labor where possible.
- Ø Great time to upgrade docks, piling replacements if funding is available.
- Ø Design for lower overhead maintenance costs .
- Ø Boating customers might be skilled tradespersons out of work, temp hires.
- Ø Dredging bids and similar work may be less costly, take advantage of savings.

• *Staff & Team to help:*

- ü Audit and clean up office boating files.
- ü Perform Rate Studies Regionally.
- ü Work with your boating supply vendors and boat brokers to have site sales as an event. (bring foot traffic to your site)
- ü Work with your labor unions to preserve jobs and revenues.
- ü Have a “garage sale” of old equipment no longer in use.

Marketing and Promotion, Get Ahead of the potential Vacancy Issues.



- **Advertise in boating magazines that have on-line readership.**
- **Target Market your customers, from Sailboats, Power Boats, Kayaks and more.**
- **Update your Marina Website.**
- **Develop new boater sign up specials.**
- **Do Not Reduce Berth Rental Prices.**
- **Have a booth at Boat Shows, team up with Yacht Clubs.**

Study your Regional Rates, Occupancies



- ✓ I repeat, Do Not Lower Rates but Provide “Deals”.
- ✓ Sign Up Specials can include 12th month free with 11 months paid.
- ✓ Partner with local Yacht Clubs and Restaurants they need foot traffic too, make it a Win-Win.
- ✓ If you have a fuel dock, provide reduced prices for existing tenants. Coupons for new tenants.

Try **NOT** to lower rates, but offer Special Deals

Customer Perks:

- Technology improvements, such as free internet for your customers.
- Fast charging for the new electric boats, vendors are out there who will build and install at no cost to you.
- Free or reduced costs of boat electrical for new first year customers.
- Free sewage pump out services.

Check your lease revenues on:

- Fuel Dock \$ per gallon and related sales
- Site Permits for events and use

Marina Rules and Regulations (when was yours last updated?)

- No fuel cans on docks for fueling safety
- Sewage Pump Out Services, approved vendor with insurance?
- Clean Marina Status items
- Seasonal Guest Berthing Rates?

Grant Funding For Your Marina

Examples in the USA

(Federal BIG/Boating Infrastructure Grant)

- Fuel Docks
- Sewage Pump Out Systems for Docks
- Floating Restrooms
- Guest Docks

Most Grant Funding for Marina's is from boat registrations, fishing licenses and other Federal Sources passed through the states to the user/marina/harbors.

Other Grant Options

- Security Fencing and Gates
- Security Cameras, AI new types
- Work Boats for towing, fire and spill containment.
- Spill Trailers fully stocked
- FEMA for Storm Damages

Federal Funding via DHS/Homeland Security and are linked to USCG or similar

Get Involved with Your Boating Community

How and Where?

- Building an Email Mailing List Serve of your boaters and partners for regular and emergency notices.
- Regular email newsletters and email safety notices.
- Key locations for bulletin board notices.

Get involved in your Boating Community:

- Develop a “Dock Captain” program with regular meetings.
- Get involved via your regional USCG members.
- Mentor your staff to “teach” boaters in your marinas.
- Have a boating event and invite USCG and others to have a tent/table at the event.
- Involve Sea Scouts and US Naval Sea Cadets, Personal Watercraft type groups, (Kayaks etc.).
- Provide Updated Safety Notices.



Events

Study what is existing events
What works well –Use It!
What does not – loose it!

Events = Revenue

Build a marketing / event budget.

Don't expect others to take on events, just lead it and mentor it!

Research regional events to succeed,
build partners to help defray expenses
and build a positive event reputation

Add to your Marketing “Clean Marina” logo’s



My Site Marketing Includes:

- *Website
- *Promotions
- *Events
- *Video
- *Public Notices via email and website
- *Staff Training



Final Tips & Take Aways

- **Be aware of slow or no pay customers.**
- **Slow down and develop a short- and long-term revenue plan.**
- **Do Study Regional Rates and Fee's**
- **Understand and study your regional marina offerings, deals and perks.**
- **Partner with your Yacht Clubs, Restaurants and Hotels to make a Win-Win**
- ***Call me for ideas and help!***

Thank you!

Scott Grindy, CMM, CPE

415-831-6324 office

415-583-3106 work cell

425-879-5801 personal cell

Scott.grindy@sfgov.org



Other Marina Resources

Electric Boat Charging Systems:

Aqua Superpower
Scott Canning
VP of Business Development
www.aqua-superpower.com

Tidal Monitors:

Kevin Mukai
COO, Hohonu 808-224-1909

[Schedule a meeting](#) | [TideCast for iOS](#)

Matter of Trust, Hair Matts:

Lisa Craig Gautier
President
+1415-235-2403

MatterOfTrust.org

Boater Satisfaction and Rate Studies:

“hr2research”

Jim Hebert

jhebert@hr2research.com

425-301-7447

ONLINE MOORING:

Capt. Matthew J. Calouro CMM
Harbormaster (Ret.)
OnlineMooring.com

mc Calouro@onlinemooring.com

(C) 1- 401-256-8663 Rhode Island
(O) 1- 813-MOORING Connecticut (1-813-666-7464)