

For immediate release

Professional Yacht Management

OWNING A LARGE BOAT IS NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES. THE PROS CAN HELP YOU, BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW A FEW THINGS FIRST.

Owning a large yacht like any major asset can be compared, in some ways to running a business. You're constantly wading through logistics and cost accounting. Are the required licences, cruising permits, insurances correct? Is the maintenance bills and crew payroll up to date? Is the berth booked at Monaco for the Grand Prix? Does the yacht meet local regulations to cruise in the US or New Zealand? How does the crew stand with Immigration?

A dream holiday or cruise can become a nightmare. Owners who wish to take part in Antigua Race Week want to race and have fun. They do not need to wade through cost analysis, wage negotiations, spares inventories etc. In direct response to this problem, professional yacht management has evolved. With experienced and qualified management, the business side of yacht ownership is taken care of, leaving owners to enjoy the pleasures.

Nick Irving of Reliance Yacht Management notes that, "Many owners do not have the time or the inclination to be an expert in all the facets of yacht ownership."

So how can one get the best from professional yacht management? It is important that the management team understand exactly what you require. "We always take time to discuss at length" says Nick Irving at Reliance, "what is important to our clients. What are their plans? What do they expect from the crew? What are the budget constraints, etc. etc?" It is important to consider the management company as your first port of call. Communication is generally never a problem whether your yacht is in the Caribbean, Mediterranean or Pacific. It is important to keep in regular contact with the management company. Reliance Yacht Management can be reached by all the usual methods phone, fax and email 24 hours a day 7 days a week. In addition Reliance is unique in being able to offer a low cost tracking and satellite communication service. Furthermore, it handles all payrolls, and just as vital to crew, forwards their post. Whether your craft is US, British or registered under a flag of convenience, your management firm can handle the sometimes complex matter of clearing your craft and landing your crew during an overseas refit. For example, if the work is being carried out in the United States and takes 183 days or more, *all* crew, American or not, must pay U.S. taxes.

Under the heading of crew administration, a yacht management firm can handle another difficult duty: crew hiring and firing. In Nick Irving's experience, there is a vast difference between European and American crew requirements. In Europe,

crew are subordinate, uniformed servants who do not socialise with the owner and his guests. By contrast, American crews are often encouraged to become "friends," which can become complicated. With professional yacht management, if a problem arises, you simply contact your management firm and request a change.

To successfully hire crew, your yacht management needs to make personnel decisions based both on professional qualifications and suitability to your lifestyle. On the latter point, Irving is very clear. "The captain's job can be 10 percent piloting the boat and 90 percent making the owner happy." It has been mentioned by many that in the end, your crew are essentially well-paid butlers."

Besides crew administration, your manager often supervises vessel administration as well, and various owners may have various requirements. Some want a strict accounting of all expenditures, right down to crew Mars bars, as well as a monthly balance sheet and quarterly and annual statements. Others say simply "don't bother me." They want all vessel administration "handled". The latter types will likely however to want detailed accounting at refit or engine-rebuild time.

One of the more expensive elements of running your yacht as a business is having a full-time bookkeeper. At Reliance Yacht Management, this service is supplied as part of the basic fee, and a statement can be sent nearly anywhere by email.

Finally, miscellaneous other services are grouped under the heading of technical support. You need to arrange a fuel in the Caribbean? Or pass through the Panama Canal? A replacement pump cleared through customs and waiting on the dock for you arrival in Hawaii? Security arranged for yourself, your loved ones, and your associates? Flights arranged? Call the management firm.

If you have a yacht, that's become a less than enjoyable, professional management is one good way to ease the pain and bring back the pleasure.

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